

Natchez Literary Celebration has big plans for '91

■ The first one proved profitable, as evidenced by a \$10,000 donation to the Natchez Historical Park Foundation.

The Natchez legacy

Like a chess soldier — born in the midst of adversity through sweat and perspiration on paper — the Natchez Literary Celebration has hit festival circuits with a bang. Now its organizers are proving there's much in culture and they turn profits to a national treasure in a not-so-steady state of mind.

"I attribute the success of this year's first celebration to the extremely high-quality participants," says Carolyn Vance Smith, celebration co-chairman. "We had Eugene Kelly — who at several standing room only. Margaret Walker Alexander had a huge following."

"And I think, too, there's such a mystique about the Natchez Trace the status, the history, the history, the fact that there's physical evidence tying us to the South. People are just drawn to the area."

Tangible evidence of that attraction came Monday when organizers of the 1990 Natchez Literary Celebration donated \$10,000 to the Natchez Historical Park Foundation during a press conference at the Va Tech Center in Natchez. Half of the money — which will be used for research and community education — came from donations from local citizens and businesses. The profits from the 1990 literary event.

Smith says, "Local Community College 'did not provide them.' Financial support in this time of state budget crisis. But a board of trustees, faculty and staff supported the literary celebration with manpower from last to first. It was a credit for the park foundation."

"Henry Clay would come to us and visit his ship," says Smith. During this period, men's society.

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B.R. Palmer for the Natchez

Marriage, the appearance the new Natchez National Historical Park, was dedicated in June during the first Natchez Literary Celebration.

or indulgence you can give them a substantial check."

Smith says another \$5,000 of Monday's contribution came from the Trust for Public Land, a national non-profit conservation organization based in San Francisco. The trust served as the building company during the purchase.

celebrations — winning their funds and getting books published — continued around the leadership. It was a mixture of love.

"There were [and] treated Johnsons they talked in front of him about everything. He read home and put it in this story. He was the Samuel P. Taylor of the time."

While Johnson's story will be key to the 1991 literary celebration — "Natchez Part 1: From A Legendary Legacy" — this year's continuation of the Natchez Trace in Natchez has resulted in a special issue of the University of Southern Mississippi's *The Southern Quarterly*. Smith says scholarly papers presented at the works of White, Alexander, Wright and Faulkner will be

of Johnson, the 1991 meeting was hosted by the National Park Service and dedicated during the June literary festival.

Johnson is the epicenter of the new Natchez National Historical Park. President George Bush recently authorized the inclusion of the State Street home of William Johnson, a freed black father whose home is to be dedicated as part of the Natchez National Historical Park during the 1991 festival. Plans are under way, Smith says, to convert the two-story, two-parade (for \$100,000) from the Natchez Landing Club, which acquired the structure from Johnson's son about 11 years ago.

Among Monday's announcements was the awarding of a \$2,000 grant from the Mississippi Arts Commission to Eugene Harrington, English professor emeritus at the University of Mississippi. Harrington will write an original drama manuscript chosen from a literary kept by William Johnson. The play will debut during next year's festival.

"Johnson's home and diary are probably part of the few major pieces of documentation we have of a black man during the mid-19th century," says Philip West, vice president of the Natchez National Historical Park Foundation. "It's important that we have some starting point to address the social status of black history."

A former slave, Johnson attended great wealth and became a plantation owner after gaining his freedom. He was also a further witness through his involvement in black and white society. His 1850-51 diary was found in the attic and published in 1950 by two Louisiana scholars — William Francis Hagan and Edwin Adams Davis — who subsequently wrote Johnson's biography, *The Father of Natchez*.

published in a spring edition.

"The literary festival is not a part of highlighting our educational heritage," says David Chinn, director of the Natchez National Park Foundation. "In addition to helping several hundred people to learn for a few days to expand a list of events, it also improves our reputation for quality of life."

The announcement of the May 18-June 1, 1991, festival included a partial agenda. Robert Hammett, University of Illinois history professor and Henry Clay scholar — will discuss Clay's Natchez life. There will be a gala at 10 o'clock to announce the 1991 reception held at the home in Clay's honor.

Scholarly panels will highlight the Trace's connection to Aaron

Burn, Richard Wright and Ellen Douglas. Alexander Hinton of the University of Mississippi will discuss the use of Natchez as a setting for German fiction during those centuries. And Allen W. Woodworth Graham — author of numerous southern novels, author of *Clarks*, which are set in Natchez — will speak.

"We're probably as widely read as Eugene Kelly in the English-speaking world," Smith says. "In the U.S., they love her work."

Although the fee for the 1991 Natchez Literary Celebration has not been set, Smith says it will be more than \$200. Reservations can be made by calling Smith at 441-2511 or writing her at Capital Community College, P.O. Box 204, Natchez, MS 39121.



COPIAH-LINCOLN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
WESSON, MISSISSIPPI 39191

Office of the President

October 15, 1990

Mr. Phillip West, Vice President
Natchez National Historical Park Foundation
Suite 10, Medical Arts Building
Natchez, MS 39120

Dear Mr. West:

It is my distinct privilege and pleasure to present to you and the Natchez National Historical Park Foundation this gift of \$10,000 for your work in furthering the rich heritage of Natchez and the new Natchez National Historical Park.


Of the total gift, \$5,000 is a direct donation from The Trust for Public Land, a non-profit national conservation organization with national headquarters in San Francisco, California. The Trust for Public Land very generously assisted with details for the dedication of the Melrose property to the Natchez National Historical Park, and officials of TPL wanted to contribute a direct gift to the work of the National Historical Park Foundation.

The other \$5,000 of the gift came from other generous donors on the local, state, and regional level as well as from ticket sales to lectures and other events in connection with the first Natchez Literary Celebration, held in Natchez June 7 - 9, 1990. This event, sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez, was extremely successful, thanks to such groups as the National Park Foundation and other hard-working organizations.

We at Copiah-Lincoln wish you well in your endeavors with the National Park Foundation and are happy to have had such a mutually rewarding project as the Natchez Literary Celebration.

If we at Copiah-Lincoln can ever be of service to you again, please do not hesitate to call on us.

Sincerely yours,


Dr. Billy B. Thames
President

BBT/mbb

Enclosure

cc: Dr. J. H. Stribling, Board Chairman
Mr. Douglas Ferguson, Trust for Public Land
Ms. Anne Peery, Trust for Public Land
Dr. Howell Garner, Dean of the College
Mr. Travis Thornton, Dean of the Natchez Campus
Mrs. Carolyn Vance Smith, Co-Lin Natchez

The Place To Be.

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page 2

MEMORANDUM



The Place to Be.

TO: David Armstrong
FROM: Carolyn Vance Smith
DATE: October 11, 1990
SUBJECT:

We are so glad you will be with us at the Press Conference on Monday, Oct. 15, 1990, at the Vocational-Technical Center on Beltline Road in Natchez.

Refreshments will be served at 3:30 p.m. The Press Conference will begin at 4 p.m. It should last no more than 30-45 minutes.

Quite a few representatives of the press have confirmed they will be there, including photographers, newspaper reporters, radio reporters, and magazine writers. Please plan to stay a few minutes after the conference for private interviews, as desired.

Each person should plan to sit either on the stage or on the front row in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Vo-Tech Center. Please see me after you arrive for actual seating arrangements.

Each person on the program (see attached tentative agenda) should plan to present short remarks, no more than two minutes each.

For your information, Dr. Robert Barnes, former president of the Natchez National Historical Park Foundation, has had to resign from office because of pressing duties as a surgeon. He said because Natchez lacks surgeons he has had to return full-time to medical duties and regrets exceedingly that he cannot be with us Oct. 15. He plans to recruit a new surgeon for Natchez and return to National Park Foundation volunteer work by next year.

We expect a crowd of 50-75 people at the Press Conference, consisting of the press; Co-Lin administrators, faculty, and staff; Natchez Literary Celebration volunteers and donors; and interested citizens.

Thank you again for agreeing to be with us Monday, October 15. See you there.

P.S.

David, Brad Chism said he would be in touch with you about your portion of the program, called "Results of the 1990 NLC." If you need me, please call Monday, Oct. 15, before 3 p.m. Thanks!

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The Natchez Literary Celebration

Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Natchez Campus P.O. Box ⁸⁹⁴~~2098~~ Natchez, MS 39121

P R E S S C O N F E R E N C E

3:30 p.m., Monday, Oct. 15, 1990

Vo-Tech Center, Beltline Road, Natchez

Please join officials of Copiah-Lincoln Community College, the National Park Service, the Natchez National Historical Park Foundation, the City of Natchez, the Adams County Board of Supervisors, the Natchez-Adams Chamber of Commerce, and other organizations at an important Press Conference Oct. 15.

Items expected to be announced:

- * The donation of a large sum of money from the 1990 Natchez Literary Celebration to the Natchez Historical Park Foundation
- * A grant from the Mississippi Arts Commission to the 1991 Natchez Literary Celebration for a docu-drama based on the diary of William Johnson, a 19th-century freed Black of Natchez
- * A special issue of the University of Southern Mississippi's scholarly journal, The Southern Quarterly, based on papers presented at the 1990 Natchez Literary Celebration

* * *

For more information, call Carolyn Vance Smith, Co-Lin Natchez, (601) 442-9111.

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Oct. 15, 1990

Tentative plans for the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration
to take place in Natchez May 30-June 1, 1991

Thurs., May 30

9 a.m. illustrated lecture - overview of Natchez history
10:30 a.m. lecture - French-Indian connection, Dr. Pat Galloway (?)
noon - lunch at Grand Village (?) with Choctaw Indians on hand
2 p.m. lecture - topic to be decided; could be Aaron Burr
3:30 p.m. lecture - Freed men in the South, Wm. Johnson in particular
6:00 p.m. - dedication of Wm. Johnson House, with reception afterward
8:45 p.m. - premiere of docu-drama based on Wm. Johnson's diary

Fri., May 31

9 a.m. lecture - Natchez as setting of fiction for three centuries, Dr.
Alexander Ritter (U. of Hamburg, Germany)
10:30 a.m. lecture - plantation society in 19th century around Natchez
11:30 a.m. lecture - Varina Howell or other topic dealing with Natchez
connection to War Between the States
2 p.m. lecture - Dr. Robert Remini on Henry Clay's connection to
Natchez
3-5 p.m. tour - Jefferson College and The Briars (?)
6-8 p.m. reception - D'Evereux, simulating the reception given there in
1842 by St. John Elliott honoring Henry Clay
8:45 p.m. - docu-drama repeat performance

Sat., June 1

9 a.m. lecture - art about or done in Natchez for three centuries or
other subject
10:30 a.m. lecture - Natchez as setting of romance novels in 19th and



COPIAH - LINCOLN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI 39120

PRESS CONFERENCE, MONDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1990

CONCERNING THE NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION

AGENDA

Welcome and Introductions

Dr. Billy B. Thames, President, Co-Lin

Report of the NLC, June 7-9, 1990

Physical and Financial
Arrangements, Program,
and Publicity

Becky Junkin Holloway, Kenneth J. Taylor,
and Carolyn Vance Smith, NLC Co-chairmen
and Faculty Members, Co-Lin Natchez

Effect on Natchez National
Historical Park

James Bainbridge, Superintendent, Natchez
Trace Parkway, Tupelo

Results of the 1990 NLC

Phillip West, President, Adams County
Board of Supervisors and Vice President,
Natchez National Historical Park
Foundation

David Armstrong, Mayor of Natchez
Brad Chism, Executive Director, Natchez
Convention and Visitor Bureau
Elbert Hilliard, Director, Mississippi
Department of Archives and History,
Jackson

Presentation of Monetary Gift
from NLC to NNHP Foundation

Dr. Thames and Mr. West

Announcement of Special Issue of
The Southern Quarterly, USM

Mrs. Smith

Plans for 1991 NLC

Stuart Johnson, Unit Manager of NNHP,
Becky Junkin Holloway, and Mrs. Smith,
Co-chairmen, 1991 NLC

Mississippi Arts Commission
Grant for 1991 NLC

Catherine "Missy" Brown, Natchez
Commissioner, Mississippi Arts Commission

Concluding Remarks

Other Special Guests and Dr. Thames

The Place to Be.

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MEMORANDUM



TO: Dr. Thames

FROM: Carolyn Vance Smith

The Place to Be.

DATE: Oct. 25, 1990

SUBJECT: Thank-you letters

The following people received thank-you letters for attending the Press Conference in Natchez Oct. 15. They are as follows:

1. Dr. Garner
2. Dean Thornton
3. Becky Holloway
4. Ken Taylor
5. Bobby DeBlieux, Natchez Pilgrimage Tours CEO
6. Brad Chism, Natchez Convention & Visitors Bureau Director
7. Sen. Bob Dearing
8. Supervisor Sammy Cauthen
9. Supervisor Thomas Campbell
10. Mayor David Armstrong
11. National Park Service Unit Manager Stuart Johnson
12. Alan Rayne, of WNAT-WQNZ radio
13. Rick Portier of WALB TV 5, Alexandria, La.
14. Dennis Drummond of WALB TV 5, Alexandria, La.
15. Jeff Holt of WNAT-WQNZ radio
16. Rhett Powell of Concordia Sentinel, Ferriday, La.
17. Barbara Kaiser of The Natchez Democrat
18. Tim McCary of The Natchez Digest magazine
19. Terry Stutzman of The Natchez Digest magazine
20. Everette and Ann Truly (He is member of board of trustees, Miss. Dept. Archives and History)
21. Barbara Potter, secretary-volunteer for 1990 NLC and writer for Natchez Digest
22. Diana Nutter of WMIS-WTJ radio
23. Mimi Miller of Miss. Dept. Archives and History of Natchez
24. Jim Barnett of Miss. Dept. Archives and History of Natchez
25. Willie Mae Dunn, bookstore chairman for 1990 NLC
26. Catherine "Missy" Brown, commissioner for Miss. Arts Commission
27. Elbert Hilliard, director of Miss. Dept. Archives and History, Jackson
28. Pres. of Supervisors Phillip West
29. Chief of Interpretation for Natchez Trace Parkway Dale Smith of Tupelo
30. Harold Young and Jo Barksdale, photographer and journalist of Jackson
31. Supervisor Maxie Wallace
32. Chairman of the Board of Natchez-Adams Chamber of Commerce John Seymour
33. Vice president of Supervisors Walter Salmon
34. Rep. Ayres Haxton

A letter of thanks also went with Clarion Ledger clipping to Anne Peery of Tallahassee, Fla. Copy is attached.

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Natchez Trace News EXPLORER

A chronicle of events and happenings along the Natchez Trace, past and present

Volume 1, Number 5

Fall 1990

Natchez literary series to return in 1991

Natchez's history is hot, if figures are any indication.

A profit of \$10,000 from a recent Natchez history and literary symposium has been announced by the event's sponsor, the Natchez Literary Celebration of Copiah-Lincoln Community College.

The entire amount was donated by the celebration to the Natchez National Historical Park Foundation for its ongoing work with the new national park in Natchez.

The donation was announced at a formal press conference in October, called by

Copiah-Lincoln officials.

The 1990 celebration, held in Natchez June 7-9, explored the theme, "The Natchez Trace: Its Literary Legacy," through lectures, tours and entertainments.

Nationally known scholars and writers, including Eudora Welty and Margaret Walker Alexander, presented papers on the connection of the Trace to the lives and works of Richard Wright, William Faulkner, Andrew Jackson, John James Audubon and others.

continued on page 4

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Documentary drama on life of William Johnson to be written

continued from page 1

These papers have resulted in a special issue of the University of Southern Mississippi's *The Southern*

Quarterly, to be published in the spring of 1991.

Also announced at the press conference was a \$2,500 grant awarded by the Mississippi Arts Commission to the 1991 Natchez Literary Celebration, set for May 30-June 1.

This money will be used to write a documentary drama based on the diary of an early 19th-century Natchez freed black man, a wealthy landowner and barber, William Johnson.

A one-time slave, Johnson gained his freedom and the respect of both black and white society in Natchez --

and kept a detailed record of daily events from 1835-51 in a private journal.

This diary was found and published in 1951 by two Louisiana scholars, William Ransom Hogan and Edwin Adams Davis. The two later collaborated on Johnson's biography, *The Barber of Natchez*.

The drama based on Johnson's diary will debut following the dedication May 30 of Johnson's State Street home to the new Natchez National Historical Park.

"Johnson's home and diary are probably part of the few major pieces of documentation we have of a black man during the mid-19th century," says Phillip West, president of the Adams County Board of Supervisors and vice president of the National Park Foundation.

"It's important that we have some starting point to address the untold stories of black history."

Theme for the second annual literary celebration is the 275th anniversary of the founding of Natchez, said co-chairman Carolyn Vance Smith of the Copiah-Lincoln English Department.

The Fort of Natchez, now called Fort Rosalie, was established by the Frenchman Bienville in 1716.

Co-sponsors of the 1991 celebra-

tion are Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the National Park Service, including the Natchez Trace Parkway and the Natchez National Historical Park.

Lectures, readings, tours and special entertainments will reveal various aspects of Natchez's 275-year lifespan, including a presentation by Robert Remini of the University of Illinois on Henry Clay's Natchez connection.

The lecture will be followed by a gala at the mansion D'Evereux simulating the 1842 reception held there in Clay's honor.

Other highlights of the 1991 celebration will be presentations by German fiction scholar Alexander Ritter of the University of Hamburg and Natchez romance novels scholar Patti Carr Black of Jackson.

Also scheduled are a reading by Natchez author Alice Walworth Graham and discussions of Natchez's connection to the Natchez Indians, Aaron Burr, Jefferson and Varina Howell Davis, Richard Wright, Ellen Douglas and Brooks Haxton.

Reservations and information about the 1991 celebration may be obtained by calling Smith at (601) 442-9111 or writing her at Copiah-Lincoln Community College, P.O. Box 894, Natchez, MS 39121. --

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THE JOURNAL OF THE
MISSISSIPPI
COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF
ENGLISH

VOLUME 13 / NUMBER 1
FALL 1990

Bulletin Board

The Hilton Hotel in Biloxi, MS (the Mississippi Gulf Coast) will be the site of **The Seventh Conference on Computers and Writing** May 24, 25, and 26, 1991. The Conference theme is **"Making Connections"** between the academic and working world and within and between disciplines.

For more information or to request registration materials contact: Julie Chaplin, USM Division of Life Long Learning, Southern Station Box 5056, Hattiesburg, MS 39406, (601) 266-4196.

* * *

Natchez Literary Celebration

Co-Sponsored by Co-Lin
and

the National Park Service

Thursday - Saturday, May 30-June 1, 1991

Headquarters: The Natchez Eola Hotel

Theme: ***"Natchez, 1716-1991: 275 Years of
Magic on the Mississippi"***

Lectures, reading, tours, entertainments celebrating
the 275th anniversary of Natchez.

Tickets: \$200 for complete package; \$15 per lecture
(Approximately 12 lecture/reading events)

Write: NLC, P. O. Box 894, Natchez, MS 39121
or call

Carolyn Vance Smith (601) 442-9111

MCTE Spring Meeting
March 10-11, 1991

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Literary Festival proceeds benefit the Natchez park

A check for \$10,000 went to the Natchez National Historical Park Foundation on Monday — proceeds from the Natchez Literary Festival.

The check represented \$5,000 from the Trust for Public Land and \$5,000 for donors and ticket sales, said Carolyn Vance Smith, a co-chairman of the literary event held in Natchez in June.

Dr. Billy B. Thomas, president of Copiah-Lincoln Community College, presented the check as a number of other dignitaries looked on. Coplin was sponsor of the event, which will be held annually.

Philip West, vice chairman of the park foundation board, accepted the check from Thomas.

On hand for the event were Elbert Hilliard, director of the Mississippi Department of Archives, Natchez Mayor David Armstrong, Stuart Johnson, area manager of the Natchez park and Fred Chase, executive director of the Natchez Convention and Visitors Bureau and of the park foundation.

A representative of the Natchez Trace Parkway also attended.

Afterwards, officials said the \$10,000 will be donated toward acquisition of the Williams Johnson House, a historic house owned by a freed slave in the early 19th century.

The house is expected to be acquired as part of Natchez's national park.

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES

The Miss-Lou



COPIAH - LINCOLN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI 39120

October 15, 1990

Dr. Robert M. Barnes, President
Natchez National Historical Park Foundation
Suite 99, Medical Arts Building
Natchez, MS 39120

Dear Dr. Barnes:

It is my distinct privilege and pleasure to present to you and the Natchez National Historical Park Foundation this gift of \$10,000 for your work in furthering the rich heritage of Natchez and the new Natchez National Historical Park.

Of the total gift, \$5,000 is a direct donation from The Trust for Public Land, a non-profit national conservation organization with national headquarters in San Francisco, California. The Trust for Public Land very generously assisted with details for the dedication of the Malrose property to the Natchez National Historical Park, and officials of TPL wanted to contribute a direct gift to the work of the National Historical Park Foundation.

The other \$5,000 of the gift came from other generous donors on the local, state, and regional level as well as from ticket sales to lectures and other events in connection with the first Natchez Literary Celebration, held in Natchez June 1-4, 1990. This event, sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez, was extremely successful, thanks to such groups as the National Park Foundation and other hard-working organizations.

We at Copiah-Lincoln wish you well in your endeavors with the National Park Foundation and are happy to have had such a mutually rewarding project as the Natchez Literary Celebration.

If we at Copiah-Lincoln can ever be of service to you again, please do not hesitate to call on us.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Billy B. Thomas, President

The

SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 1991

Natchez I

Serving Natchez, Vidalia and the Miss-Lou

Natchez birthday center of literary celebration

By JOAN GANDY
The Natchez Democrat

The oldest town on the Mississippi River will light candles in the sky to celebrate its 275th birthday on June 1.

Natchez, settled by Frenchmen in 1716, plans a party with an international flavor on June 1 at the town's scenic bluff park overlooking the Mississippi.

Fireworks, music and entertainment befitting the multi-culture history of the town will cap the four-day second annual Natchez Literary Celebration, which also will include dedication of a second Natchez landmark to the Natchez

National Historical Park.

"This is an event to pull the whole community together and to give Co-Lin Natchez sponsorship of an educational event," said Carolyn Vance Smith, English instructor at the Natchez campus of Copiah-Lincoln Community College and a coordinator of the celebration.

In June 1990, Co-Lin sponsored its first literary celebration, tying into the dedication of antebellum Melrose, centerpiece of the Natchez National Historical Park. More than 1,000 people attended that dedication.

See LITERARY, Page 9A

Literary

Continued from Page 1A

The 1991 event, again sponsored by Co-Lin and the National Park Service, will include dedication of the second section of the national park — the William Johnson House, 19th-century home of a freed black Natchez barber whose diary is among the most significant historical material from that period in the South.

Susan Johnson, manager of the Natchez park, said the literary celebration gives the park service "a chance to legitimize the history we're interpreting."

Lecturers, following the theme, "From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure," will cover the nearly three centuries of settlement and change from earliest Natchez life to the present in programs that will begin May 29 and continue through June 1.

"There will be serious presentations and lively entertainment,"

Smith said. "The scholarly portion of the celebration features internationally known historians and writers, who will paint a broad picture as they lecture on three centuries of literature, history and culture."

The more than a dozen lectures will be free, Smith said, as will many of the other events. "The reason so many of our events are free this year is that we received a \$37,718 grant from the Mississippi Humanities Council."

Some events, such as meals and certain entertainment, will require a fee. Lectures, though free, will require a ticket because of limited seating at The Natchez Eola Hotel, where all lectures will be given.

"One of the things we're most excited about this year is the world premiere on May 30 of a documentary drama called, 'A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez,'" Smith said.

The play, based on the Johnson diary, will be presented twice during the four-day period.

Many Miss-Lou businesses will tell their story

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Natchez prepares for 275th birthday

By The Associated Press

NATCHEZ, Miss. — The oldest town on the Mississippi River will light candles in the sky to celebrate its 275th birthday on June 1.

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"This is an event to pull the whole community together and to give Co-Lin Natchez sponsorship of an educational event," said Carolyn Vance Smith, English instructor at the Natchez campus of Capital-Lincoln Community College and a coordinator of the celebration.

In June 1986, Co-Lin sponsored its first literary celebration, tying into the dedication of antebellum Melrose, centerpiece of the Natchez National Historical Park. More than 1,000 people attended that dedication.

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The play, based on the Johnson diary, will be presented twice during the four-day period. Also, two lecturers will focus on antebellum black history — "Free Men of Color in the South before 1861" by John W. Blasingame of Yale University's Afro-American Studies; and "My Research on William Johnson" by Edwin Adams Davis, professor of history emeritus at Louisiana State University.

Lectures and events start with earliest Natchez history, however, centering on 18th-century Indian life and lore. Programs continue with a look at cotton plantation capitalists in the antebellum South's golden age.

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February 1991



MISSISSIPPI

Volume XXXIII

Number 2

Natchez Literary Celebration 91

Plans for a 1991 Natchez Literary Celebration May 30-June 1 are underway, announced co-chair Carolyn Smith, professor of English, Copiah Lincoln Community College, Natchez Branch, co-sponsors of the annual event with the National Park Service. A grant of \$2,500 from the Mississippi Arts Commission will sponsor the writing of a documentary drama on the life of early 19th century Natchez freed black man, William Johnson. The presentation of the play, plus lectures, readings, tours, and special entertainments will focus on this year's festival theme, the 275th anniversary of the founding of Natchez. Highlights will include presentations by Robert Remini of the University of Illinois on Henry Clay's Natchez connection; and Patti Carr Black, State Historical Museum director, on Natchez romance novels. Last year's very successful festival yielded a profit of \$10,000, all of which was donated to the Natchez Historical Park Foundation. For reservations and information about the festival, call Smith at (601) 442-9111 or write her at Co-Lin Community College, P.O. Box 894, Natchez, MS 39121.

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page 14

Natchez to celebrate 275th birthday in June with fireworks and literature

The Associated Press

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The more than a dozen lectures will be free, Smith said, as will many of the other events.

Some events, such as meals and certain entertainment, will require a fee. Lectures, though free, will require a ticket because of limited seating at The Natchez Eola Hotel, where all lectures will be given.

"One of the things we're most excited about this year is the world premiere on May 30 of a documentary drama called, *A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez*, Smith said.

The play, based on the Johnson diary, will be presented twice during the four-day period. Also, two lecturers will focus on antebellum black history — *Free Men of Color in the South before 1861* by John W. Blassingame of Yale University's Afro-American Studies and *My Research on William Johnson* by Edwin Adams Davis, professor of history emeritus at Louisiana State University.

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Natchez Trace News EXPLORER

A chronicle of events and happenings along the Natchez Trace, past and present

Volume 1, Number 9

Spring 1991

Natchez Literary Celebration recognizes history of river city

by Carolyn Vance Smith
Special to the News

A major milestone in the history of the ancient river port of Natchez, Miss., will be noted numerous ways May 29 - June 1 during the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration.

The 1991 event is called "From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary."

The event, headquartered at the Natchez Eola Hotel, is co-sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the National Park Service's Natchez National Historical Park. Chairmen are Becky Junkin Nevill and Carolyn Vance Smith of Copiah-Lincoln and Stuart Johnson of the Park Service.

Natchez, the oldest settlement on the Mississippi

continued on page 3

Spring 1991

Special events planned to honor city's rich heritage

continued from page 1

River, was founded as a French trading post in 1716.

Later it was capital of the Mississippi Territory, birthplace of the state of Mississippi and home during the reign of King Cotton to more millionaires per capita than any other city in America.

Because of the area's historical richness, in 1990 the National Park Service named a portion of the city the Natchez National Historical Park.

The area's 275th anniversary will be marked during the literary celebration by a mix of serious presentations and lively entertainments.

The scholarly portion of the celebration features internationally-known historians and writers, who will paint a broad picture as they lecture on Natchez's three centuries of literature, history and culture.

These lectures are open to the public free of charge, partially because of a \$17,718 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities through the Mississippi Humanities Council.

The lectures will be enhanced by the world premiere May 30 of a special drama called "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez." Johnson will be the subject of a lecture prior to the play.

This drama, by Dr. Evans Harrington of the University of

Mississippi, is based on an extensive diary kept by Johnson, a wealthy free black of Natchez who died in 1851.

In connection with the play is a free ceremony May 30 dedicating the house of William Johnson to the National Park Service. This house was acquired in 1976 from Johnson's descendants by the Natchez Garden Club with grants administered by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

"The club partially restored the house with the hope that it would eventually become a museum dedicated to the life of Johnson and other aspects of African-American history," said Ellen Mosby, chairman of the dedication ceremony.

During the spring of 1991 the City of Natchez will acquire the William Johnson House complex on State

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page 16

Literary festival recalls long history of the river city

continued from page 4

Lecturers include such internationally known literature and history experts as Dr. Michel Fabre of The Sorbonne in Paris; Dr. Alexander Ritter of the University of Hamburg, Germany; Dr. John Blassingame and Dr. Jay Gitlin, Yale University; Dr. Robert Remini, University of Illinois; Dr. Michael Wayne, University of Toronto; and the author Nancy Scott Anderson of San Diego.

Also on the program are award-winning novelists Ellen Douglas and Alice Walworth Graham, both Natchez natives; Dr. David Sansing of the University of Mississippi; Dr.

William K. Scarborough of the University of Southern Mississippi; Dr. Edwin Adams Davis of Louisiana State University; Patti Carr Black and James F. Barnett Jr. of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History; the poet Brooks Haxton of Sarah Lawrence College; the musician Richard Haxton of Los Angeles; the musician and writer Kenneth Haxton of Greenville, Miss.; and historians Ayres Haxton and Sim C. Callon of Natchez.

Lecture topics include: an overview of Natchez's 275-year history; the early, powerful Natchez Indian tribe; Natchez's French con-

nection; the aristocratic Natchez planters who owned thousands of slaves prior to the Civil War — and what happened after the war; the Confederacy's First Lady, Varina Howell Davis of Natchez, who married Jefferson Davis in Natchez in 1845; Natchez as the setting of fiction for three centuries; and Richard Wright, a world-renowned black writer born in Natchez.

Tickets for all events, including the free lectures, must be reserved in advance. The entire package of all special meals and other events is \$100 per person. Individual tickets range from \$10 to \$30 per event.

Since seating is limited, tickets are on a first-come, first-served basis.

Reservations or inquiries about the cost for individual events may be made by writing Natchez Literary Celebration, P.O. Box 894, Natchez, MS 39121. —

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Natchez hosts literary talks

continued from page 3

state-appropriated money. Both properties will then be donated to the National Park Service.

Also free during the celebration will be a 275th family-style birthday party June 1, with fireworks, food and entertainment on the Natchez Bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River.

Other free events are a pops concert by the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra and an historic flower show.

Options at low cost are the William Johnson drama, tours of several historic mansions and sites, a picnic at the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, cocktails and lunch at the Carriage House Restaurant on the grounds of historic Skorton Hall, a gala Henry Clay-inspired reception at the mansion D'Overux and numerous relevant printed materials.

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The Natchez Digest

Community Current Events
Fares & Places

March 1991

Natchez readies for 275th birthday!

A major milestone in the history of the ancient river port of Natchez, Miss., will be noted *numerous* ways May 29-June 1 during the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration.

The 1991 event is called "From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary." Headquarters of the celebration is The Natchez Eels Hotel.

Natchez, the oldest settlement on the Mississippi River, was founded as a French trading post in 1716.

Later it was capital of the Mississippi Territory, birthplace of the state of Mississippi and home during the reign of King Cotton to more millionaires per capita than any other city in America.

Because of the area's historical richness, in 1990 the National Park Service named a portion of the city the Natchez National Historical Park.

The area's 275th anniversary will be marked during the literary celebration by a mix of serious presentations and lively entertainments.

The long weekend is co-sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the National Park Service's Natchez National Historical Park and Natchez Trace Parkway. Among numerous associate sponsors is the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

The scholarly portion of the celebration features internationally known historians and writers, who will paint a broad picture as they lecture on Natchez's three centuries of literature, history and culture. These lectures are open to the public free of charge, partially because of a \$17,718 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities through the Mississippi Humanities Council.

The lectures will be enhanced by the world premiere May 30 of a special drama called "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez." Johnson will be the subject of a lecture prior to the play.

This drama, by Dr. Evara Harrington of the University of Mississippi, is based on an extensive diary kept by Johnson, a wealthy free Black of Natchez who died in 1851.

In connection with the play is a free ceremony May 30 dedicating the House of William Johnson to the National Park Service. This house was acquired in 1976 from Johnson's descendants by the Natchez Garden Club with grants administered by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

"The club partially restored the house with the hope that it would eventually become a museum dedicated to the life of Johnson and other aspects of African-American history," said Ellen Mosby, chairman of the dedication ceremony.

"The National Park Service is acquiring the property with the intention of making that dream come true," she said.

During the spring of 1991 the City of Natchez will acquire the William Johnson House and an adjacent property on State Street in downtown Natchez, using state-appropriated money. Both properties will then be donated to the National Park Service.

Also free during the celebration will be a 275th family-style birthday party June 1, with fireworks, food and entertainment on the Natchez bluff overlooking the Mississippi River.

Other free events are a pops concert by the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra and an historic flower show.

Options at low cost are the William Johnson drama, tours of several historic mansions and sites, a picnic at the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, cocktails and lunch at the famous Carriage House Restaurant on the grounds of historic Starline Hall, a gala Henry Clay-inspired reception at the mansion D'Everett and a packet of numerous printed materials.

Lecturers include such internationally known literature and history experts as Dr. Michel Fabre of The Sorbonne in Paris; Dr. Alexander R. Lee of the University of Hamburg, Germany; Dr. John Blassingame and Dr. Jay Gelin, both of Yale University; Dr. Robert Rensini, University of Illinois; Dr. Michael Wayne, University of Toronto; the author Nancy Scott Anderson of San Diego; award-winning novelists Ellen Douglas and Alice Walworth Graham, both of Natchez; Dr. David Searing of the University of Mississippi; Dr. William K. Scarborough of the University of Southern Mississippi; Dr. Edwin Adams Davis of Louisiana State University; Patti Carr Black and James F. Burnett Jr., both of Mississippi Department of Archives and History; the poet Brooks Hanson of Sarah Lawrence College; the musician Richard Haxton of Los Angeles; the musician and writer Kenneth Hatten of Greenville, Miss.; and historians Ayres Haxton and Sin C. Callon, both of Natchez.

Lecture topics include:

- An overview of Natchez's 275-year history
- The early, powerful Natchez Indian tribe
- Natchez's French connection
- The aristocratic Natchez planters who owned thousands of slaves prior to the Civil War — and what happened in the aftermath of the war
- Free men of color before the Civil War, including Natchez's William Johnson
- Henry Clay's Natchez connection
- The Confederacy's First Lady, Varina Howell Davis of Natchez, who married Jefferson Davis in Natchez in 1845
- Natchez as the setting of fiction for three centuries
- Natchez as the setting for romance novels in the 19th and 20th centuries
- Richard Wright, world-renowned Black writer born in Natchez
- Natchez as the inspiration for various creative members of Ellen Douglas' family

Tickets for all events, including the free lectures, must be reserved in advance. The entire package of all special meals and other events is \$100 per person. Individual tickets range

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from \$10 to \$30 per event. Since seating is limited, tickets are on a first-come, first-served basis.

Reservations or inquiries about the cost for individual events may be made by writing Natchez Literary Celebration, P.O. Box 894, Natchez, MS 39121.

Co-chairmen of the Literary Celebration are Becky Junkin Nevill and Carolyn Vance Smith, faculty members at Copiah-Lincoln Community College, and Stuart K. Johnson, superintendent of the Natchez National Historical Park.

Carolyn Vance Smith
Copiah Lincoln Community College
Natchez, MS 39120 (601) 442-9111



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FOCUS on the Humanities

Volume 4, Number 1 NS

A Publication of the Mississippi Humanities Council

March 1991

Regrants Awarded December 1990 - February 1991

MISSISSIPPI UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN "Presentation on the Works of Robert Burns and J. M. Barrie"	\$ 460.00
MADISON COUNTY-CANTON PUBLIC LIBRARY Speaker, Mr. William Haynie	210.00
THE INTERNATIONAL VISITORS CENTER OF JACKSON "Society in Development: Race Relations in the New South"	1,000.00
SOUTH MISSISSIPPI REGIONAL LIBRARY "Let's Talk About Ellen Douglas, the Mississippi Author"	664.00
MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL FOR MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE "Literary Fiction and the Science Fiction"	2,325.00
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY "Mississippi and the Civil War"	8,220.00
MISSISSIPPI HISTORICAL SOCIETY "Hernando de Soto in Mississippi: New Ideas on an Old Problem"	4,395.00
MILLSAPS COLLEGE Speaker, Mr. Frederick M. ...	

UNIVERSITIES CENTER "The Gulf Crisis: Why did it Happen? What Does it Mean?"	1,000.00
MISSISSIPPI CULTURAL CROSSROADS "Then and Now: The Allen Photographs a Century Later"	9,041.00
MUSEUM OF THE SOUTHERN JEWISH EXPERIENCE "The Changing Image of Southern Jewish Life II"	21,073.80
PEARL RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE "The Return of Thomas Jefferson"	3,675.00
MISSISSIPPI 2020 NETWORK INC. "Government by 'The Few' vs Government by Citizen Participation, or Developing Leadership for Citizen Participation"	7,500.00
THE ARTS AND SCIENCE CENTER FOR SOUTHEAST ARKANSAS "Saturday Night, Sunday Morning: The Travels of Gatemouth Moore"	15,120.00
COPPIN-JACKSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S NATCHEEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION "From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary"	17,718.00
L. ZENOBIA COLEMAN LIBRARY, TOUGALOO COLLEGE "African-American Collection Development Seminar"	1,000.00

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THE SOUTHERN REGISTER



*The Newsletter of the Center
for the Study of Southern Culture
The University of Mississippi
Spring 1991*



SECOND ANNUAL NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION SCHEDULED

On May 29-June 1, 1991, Natchez will celebrate its 275th anniversary with a symposium exploring the literature, history, and culture of the area since its founding in 1716.

The symposium is the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration, with the theme "From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary." Former Mississippi governor William Winter will direct the proceedings to be held at the Natchez Hotel.

The event is co-sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the National Park Service.

Of particular interest will be the dedication on Thursday, May 30, of the

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William Johnson House on State Street to the Natchez National Historical Park. Johnson was a free man of color in early Natchez who kept an extensive diary of Natchez current events. His home will be the focal point of the Natchez Park's interest in black history.

Following the ceremony will be a reception and dinner at Magnolia Hall.

Other special events during the symposium will be lectures by the Haxton family of Mississippi, including Representative Ayes Haxton of Natchez and his mother, the novelist Ellen Douglas; Michel Fabre, the Richard Wright scholar of Paris, France; Barbara Fields of Columbia University, who appeared in the recent PBS

Spring 1991

Civil War series; David Sansing, of the University of Mississippi; and Robert Remini, of the University of Illinois.

Social events include receptions at D'Evereux, Melrose, and Stanton Hall; tours of the Briars, Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, and Jefferson College; an original play based on William Johnson's diary by Evans Harrington of the University of Mississippi; and a concert by the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra.

For additional information contact Carolyn Vance Smith, P. O. Box 894, Natchez, MS 39121-0894; telephone: 601-442-9111 or 601-442-7047.

The Southern Register

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PAGE

SUNDAY, MARCH 17, 1991

Reader says Johnson no hero to blacks

I am writing in response to your editorial of March 15 in which you indicated that there was something for black people to be proud of with the purchase of the William Johnson House.

I believe we have a legitimate difference of opinion in regard to

Letters to the editor

this matter and how it should be regarded.

William Johnson was no paragon of virtue. He was a slaveowner whose claims to fame are a diary and a house.

He is not someone for Afro-Americans to be proud of but, rather, someone that they must be aware of.

For this reason, and this reason only, I enthusiastically support

the National Park Service purchase of this house.

It would be tragedy indeed if black men and women would stick out their chests and assume any degree of pride, sympathy or empathy for Mr. Johnson.

Dr. J.R. Todd
Natchez resident
See LETTERS, Page 5A

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The Natchez Literary Celebration

Sponsored by

Copiah-Lincoln Community College

and

The National Park Service

•Natchez Trace Parkway

•Natchez National Historical Park

Post Office Box 894

Natchez, MS 39121-0894

(601) 442-9111

(601) 442-7047

FAX (601) 446-9967

April 1, 1991

Ms. Marda Burton
517 Dumaine #4
New Orleans, LA 70116

Dear Marda:

Do I have a story for you!!

Natchez will celebrate its 275th anniversary this year -- with fireworks, birthday cake, internationally known authors and historians, music, the premiere of a new play about free Black William Johnson of Natchez, parties, parties, parties and FUN!

And much, really MOST, of the celebration is free. We want everybody to know about it and to come!!

I'm enclosing a brochure for your use. I'm also enclosing a news release.

For any interviews you might want, please just give me a call. So many of these events are wonderful feature story ideas. For instance:

1. The new two-act play, "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez." It's based on a 16-year diary kept by a free Black in Natchez from 1835-1851. Johnson's home has been obtained by the National Park Service as part of the new Natchez National Historical Park. The house will be dedicated to the park service May 30.
2. An historic flower show with the design division set in 1842; all will be displayed at D'Evereux, one of Natchez's showplaces. That evening a gala reception will take place, similar to the one given in 1842 for Henry Clay. The people who have researched the horticulture, containers, and designs really know what they're talking about, and the place will look very much like it looked when William St. John Elliott opened his brand-new mansion for The Hon. Mr. Clay in 1842.
3. THE expert on Richard Wright, Dr. Michel Fabre of The Sorbonne, will be in Natchez to discuss the famous writer. Wright's family members will be here, too.
4. The Haxton family will discuss how Natchez has influenced them. Ellen Douglas (Josephine Ayres Haxton) is the mother of three sons, Ayres, Brooks, and Richard. Their father is Kenneth Haxton. All trace their lineage back 180 years or more; the first mayor of Natchez was Samuel Brooks, their great, great, great-grandfather. All five are extremely talented people. They write, compose music, play instruments, etc. Kenneth Haxton also constructs crossword puzzles for the NY Times and has constructed a special one for the Literary Celebration based on Natchez history.

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The Natchez Literary Celebration

co-sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College and
the Natchez National Historical Park

presents

275 Years of Natchez's Favorite Music *a Pops Concert by* **The Mississippi Symphony Orchestra**



Wednesday, May 29, 1991
6:00 p.m.
Natchez Municipal Auditorium
Natchez, Mississippi



The Natchez Literary Celebration

Co-sponsored by
Copiah-Lincoln Community College
and
The Natchez National Historical Park

presents

The Haxton Family of Natchez

Saturday, June 1, 1991, Natchez, Mississippi
The Honorable William F. Winter, presiding

"NATCHEZ THREADS IN A FAMILY WEAVING"
Mr. Ayres Haxton, Representative to the Mississippi Legislature,
Natchez, Mississippi
The Middle Son

**"A FICTIONAL WORLD:
LANDSCAPE AND CHARACTER"**
Mrs. Josephine Ayres Haxton (Ellen Douglas)
Writer-in-Residence, The University of Mississippi
The Mother

"NATCHEZ POEMS"
Mr. Brooks Haxton, Visiting Poet
Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York
The Youngest Son

"NATCHEZ: AN INSPIRATION"
Mr. Richard Haxton, Writer, Actor, Musician,
Los Angeles, California
The Oldest Son

"NATCHEZ: ITS INFLUENCE ON MY MUSIC"
Mr. Kenneth Haxton, Writer and Musician,
Greenville, Mississippi
The Father

"MOTHERS AND CHILDREN" - A PREMIERE
Music by Mr. Kenneth Haxton
Lyrics by Mrs. Josephine Ayres Haxton
Cheryl Coker, Soprano Frank Lynch, Oboe
Rae Shannon, Piano Janette Sudderth, Cello

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page 24

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 1991

Natchez to be guest of honor

Some exciting plans are in the works for the celebration of Natchez's 275th birthday, and everyone is invited to participate.

On June 1 on the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River in downtown Natchez, you are invited to gather with family and friends from all over the Miss-Lou to celebrate 275 years of Natchez history.

Organizers of the Natchez Literary Celebration realized that 1991 is the 275th anniversary of the construction of Fort Rosalie, which established Natchez as a permanent settlement.

The official birthday party is slated for Saturday, June 1, at the conclusion of the Natchez Literary Celebration. The Historic Natchez Foundation and the MainStreet Natchez Partnership are co-sponsors of the day's events.

The fun begins at 3 p.m. with a "Hands-on-History Fair," for kids of all ages. There will be exhibitions, demonstrations and re-enactments from throughout our 275 years of history, including Indian basket making, weaving, quilting, blacksmithing and buck skinnings.

In addition, there will be storytelling, portrayals of famous Natchezians, children's activities and much more. Add to this music, art, food and entertainment and you have the makings of a fun day.



Top of the Morning

SANDRA BURKES
Natchez resident

The highlight of the day's activities will be the official birthday party at 6:30 p.m. at the gazebo, a city-wide celebration complete with party favors, ice cream, cake and the premiere of a new song about our city sung by adults and children from throughout the town.

Area clubs and organizations have been sent letters requesting their assistance in putting on this event and asking them to consider giving a gift of time or money to a community project as a birthday gift to Natchez.

The official party ends with Natchez Coca-Cola sponsoring a spectacular fireworks display over the river. You won't want to miss this.

All of these events are free to the public. And if all this is not enough, the MainStreet Natchez Partnership is sponsoring a Birthday Bash

street dance at the Canal Street Depot, which will begin at the conclusion of the fireworks display and last on into the night.

The Blaz Boys, a 15-piece rhythm and blues band from Jackson, will lead the partying. Tickets will go on sale May 1 and will be \$7.50 before the dance; \$10 at the gate. Proceeds will benefit the Downtown Christmas Parade by adding floats and bands.

Limited edition T-shirts commemorating this historic occasion will be sold by the Chamber of Commerce. Free party favors will be available to the first 2,500 people gathered around the gazebo at 6:30 p.m. on June 1.

By now I hope you are excited about Natchez's 275th birthday. You can get in on the action early by coming to Longwood tomorrow

— Thursday, April 25, at 5:15 p.m. and participating in a publicity photo shoot.

Bring your family and friends. People of all ages are needed to appear in a photo, which will be placed on a poster publicizing this event.

Look for more information about birthday party events in the coming weeks, but mark your calendar for Saturday, June 1, and start practicing now to sing "Happy Birthday, dear Natchez, Happy Birthday to you!"

For more information on events and activities or to volunteer your time to help celebrate this historic occasion, call 445-4611.

1991 part 1
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TRAVEL

□ WHERE

□ HOW TO GET THERE

□ WHAT TO DO

Happy 275th, Natchez!

By CYNTHIA V. CAMPBELL

Travel editor

Natchez is a city of dreams — a town that thrives on memories of yesteryear, when Jim Bowie, Andy Jackson and young Mrs. Julia Nutt were part of the daily scene.

However, folks in Natchez don't just sit around and dream about days gone by. Local residents have parlayed the town's colorful antebellum past into a bustling tourist business, and with the city's 270th birthday coming up on June 1, things are getting better daily. Natchez has planned a series of events for early summer that will entertain just about anyone of any age.

Coming up within the next months will be the first Natchez Opera Festival, May 4-31; The Natchez Literary Celebration, May 29-June 1; the 275th Natchez Birthday Bash, June 1; and the first summer Victorian Tour of Homes, June 23.

The Natchez Opera Festival opens May 4 with a Gala Operatic Recital featuring internationally known soprano Phyllis Demetropoulos at 8 p.m. in St. Mary's Cathedral. A black tie reception will follow immediately at Glenburnie.

Dr. David Blackburn, teacher and operatic coach at the Institute of Vocal Arts in New York, has organized the festival, and he is bringing to Natchez both international artists and young performers selected from New York for the occasion.

Other area events will include: May 10, Mozart 200th Birthday Celebration, with soprano Ida Huber, tenor Edwin Griffith and pianist Marie Franke; Le Verre, 8 p.m., Natchez Eola Hotel; Best of Broadway, May 11, 7 p.m., Rosalie; and May 26, 3 p.m., Stanton Hall; Opera Spectacular, May 12, 3:30 p.m., Eola Hotel; and May 24, 7 p.m., Rosalie; *Mac of La Mancha*, 8 p.m. May 18, City Auditorium; Operatic Recital with tenor Perry Brubaker and soprano Janet Tynes, May 19, 2 p.m., Holy Family Church; Songs of the River with bass George Hogan and soprano Penny Johnson, May 26 and May 28, 7 p.m., Eola Hotel; and *La Traviata*, City Auditorium, May 31, 8:30 p.m.

Now in its second year, the Natchez Literary Celebration encompasses far more than lectures and readings, although these are an important part of the agenda. Activities include discussions, tours, ceremonies and entertainments exploring the literature, history and culture of Natchez.

"From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary" will be the theme of this year's program, which will open May 29 with a history lecture by Dr. David Searing of the University of Mississippi at



Visitors stroll down Silver Street to Natchez Under the Hill, where paddle wheelers still ply the Mississippi River.

Photos by John D.

HISTORIC NATCHEZ FOUNDATION

P.O. BOX 1761, NATCHEZ, MS 39121 • 108 S. COMMERCE ST., NATCHEZ, MS 39120 • 601-442-2500

NEWSLETTER

Vol. II, No. 3

April 1991

please call HNF at 442-2500. Our long-term hope is to develop and offer several school tours to students throughout the area.

NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT: Ora Frazier, working with HNF, is spearheading the Prince Street School District Neighborhood Project. This project is designed to improve buildings in that area. Ora recently received a grant from International Paper Company to help with the work.

INVITATION TO HNF MEMBERS: All members, their families and friends are invited to Longwood at 5:15 p.m. on Thursday, April 25, for a photograph session. The photo will be used as a publicity poster for Natchez' 275th Birthday Celebration.

NATCHEZ' 275TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION: HNF's Patricia Catchings, Main Street Natchez's Beckie Johnson, and other volunteers are planning for the grand event to take place on June 1. Watch for future details of the birthday celebration, which coincides with the 2nd annual Natchez Literary Celebration taking place May 29-June 1. (For info on the literary celebration, write P. O. Box 894, Natchez.)

BLACK HISTORY: Ron Davis, professor from the Department of History at California State University at Northridge, recently spent a week in Natchez using HNF research files. Professor Davis is working with the National Park Service, gathering information for an Afro-American history to be used at the William Johnson house.

LICENSING PROGRAM UPDATE: Mabel and Ron will be gone April 16-22 to the spring furniture market at High Point, N.C.

Henredon is introducing three new pieces in the collection: Stanton Hall sofa, Elms Court ottoman (an inspiration to go with the Elms Court club chair), Fair Oaks chair which offers a slipcover option.

Sligh Furniture Company is introducing two tall case clocks, one reproduced from Mistletoe and one from Glenburnie.

John Richards Company is introducing a new group of 28 framed prints. In May, the annual meeting of all Historic Natchez Collection licensees will be held here in Natchez.

HNF WISH LIST:

Flowers: The Collection showroom could use cut flower arrangements for special occasions at various times during the year. We'd like to organize a list of volunteers who have flowers and can arrange them so that when flowers are needed, we could call someone on the list. If you would like to volunteer, please call (442-2500).

Computer: We are getting our new, larger computer up and operational. (The foundation outgrew the capacity of the old one.) We could use a lap top with a hard drive if anyone has one that they are no longer using.

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Auditions continue today for William Johnson play

Auditions will continue at 6 p.m. today for roles in "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez."

The tryouts will be held in the Copiah-Lincoln Community College auditorium on the Washington campus.

The play, which was written by Evans Herrington, an English professor at the University of Mississippi, will be performed May 30 and June 1 in conjunction with the Natchez Literary Celebration.

Many of the leading roles were filled during an earlier audition on April 5. Director Richard Alwood said Wednesday he has speaking parts open for eight white males and eight black males, as well as a number of non-speaking parts.

"And I want to stress that these aren't the major roles, so they will not require a lot of studying or time," he said.

Anyone wanting more information about the audition can call Alwood at 318-757-2787.

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EDUCATION

NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION: A BIRTHDAY GIFT

By Carolyn Vance Smith

Famous Natchez residents and visitors then and now—including Richard Wright, Ellen Douglas, Josephine Ayres Macdoni, Henry Clay, Varina Howell Davis and Alice Walworth Grogan—will be the subjects of free

party on the Natchez Bluffs June 1, complete with cake, ice cream, music, exhibits, entertainment and fireworks.

¶ The premiere of a new play, "A Gentleman of Color," William Johnson and his Natchez, May 30 and June 1, costing \$18, or color, for \$7.

¶ An Indian related picnic

¶ All the above activities for a reduced price of \$100 per person.

One of the lectures attracting much attention is that about Richard Wright, who was born near Natchez in 1898 and spent part of his early childhood in Natchez at the home of his grandparents on Woodlawn street.

Dr. Michel Fabre of the Sorbonne in Paris, France, author of numerous books and articles about Wright, will discuss Natchez's Pulitzer Prize winning author in a lecture June 1 called "Richard Wright and Natchez: An Enduring Connection."

A memorial monument honoring Wright was erected on the Natchez Bluffs during the first Natchez Literary Celebration in June 1988.

Another lecture will focus on William Johnson and other early 19th-century free men of color. This lecture by Dr. John Hanningham, Director of African-American Studies at Yale University, is called "Free men of Color in the South Before 1861."

Johnson, a wealthy barber and landowner in Natchez who died in 1851, kept a diary for 16 years. This diary resulted in a biography called "The Barber of Nat-

chez and read from two of her novels which were set in Natchez, one in the 19th century and one in the early 20th century.

Other lecturers will discuss Varina Howell of Natchez, who married Jefferson Davis, at the Bluffs in 1845; Henry Clay, a frequent visitor to Natchez in the 1860's; and numerous other individuals and groups.

¶ Additional information about the Natchez Literary Celebration may be obtained by writing Natchez Literary Celebration, P.O. Box 884, Natchez, Miss. 39121 or by calling 1-800-647-6742 or (601) 442-7341.



Richard Wright

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**SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS
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William Johnson

lectures by the internationally known experts May 29 through June 1 at the Second Annual Natchez Literary Celebration.

The cultural event is called "From Provincial



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Literary Doings

A Natchez literary celebration will honor the city's 275th anniversary with an educational and cultural event, "From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure," May 29 to June 1. Activities include lectures, readings and discussions on history and culture by writers and scholars from Europe, Canada and the United States.

In addition, a dedication of the House of William Johnson will take place May 30 at 6 p.m., making the house part of the new Natchez National Historical Park. Johnson was a free black and local historian who died in 1851. A play, based on Johnson's 16-year diary, will be premiered following the house dedication at 8:30 p.m. The play, "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez," will be held at the Natchez High School auditorium. Cost is \$10 per person, students \$7. Another performance will be offered June 1 at 3 p.m.

Other events include a free concert by the Mississippi Symphony

Orchestra, which will play 275 years of Natchez music—show tunes, classics and semi-classical—at 6 p.m. on May 29 at the Natchez Municipal Auditorium. Also, a free lecture and a party honoring Henry Clay, a politician, statesman and former presidential candidate, will take place on May 31. The lecture will be at 10:30 a.m. at the Natchez Eola Hotel in downtown Natchez. The party will be held 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the D'Evereux mansion. Cost is \$20 per person for food and entertainment.

An Indian picnic will take place at noon on May 30 at the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, with Choctaw Indians weaving baskets and offering Indian music, food and exhibits. Tours of three historic buildings have been scheduled for May 31 beginning at 2:30 p.m. The buildings are the city-owned Auburn, noted for its elliptical staircase, the 1835 Elms Court Mansion and Jefferson College, oldest college in Mississippi. Tour cost is \$15 per person, including refreshments.

The literary celebration will end June 1 with a family-style birthday party on the Natchez Bluff, complete with cake and ice cream, music, street dancing and special fireworks over the Mississippi River.

Tickets for all events, including free lectures, must be reserved. A package of all events and meals costs \$100 per person. Single tickets are \$10 to \$30 per person per event.

For more information, contact the Natchez Literary Celebration, P.O. Box 894, Natchez, Miss. 39121, (800) 647-6742, or Carolyn Vance Smith at (601) 442-9111.

Los Angeles
Times
April 21, 1991

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New play chronicles the life of Natchez's William Johnson

Auditions planned for Friday evening

By STACY GRANING
The Natchez Democrat

Producing a new play is never an easy task, but Richard Alwood believes he'll be successful with his latest endeavor — a historical drama on the life of William Johnson.

"I'm an optimist," said Alwood, who is producing the play in conjunction with the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration. "We don't have much time to get it together, but I believe we can."

"And I believe it's going to be a good play."

The play, "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez," was written by Evans Harrington, an English professor at the University of Mississippi who has spent a great deal of time studying Johnson's life and his diaries.

Johnson was a free black man who lived in Natchez during the early 1800s. His candid and complete diaries detailed the life around him — from news events to social outings.

His State Street house, known as the William Johnson House, will join other properties in the Natchez National Historical Park.

The play, which was written for the literary celebration, will be performed May 30 for celebration participants and in a June 1 matinee for Natchez residents at the Natchez High School auditorium.

"We're going to try and give everyone a chance to come and see it," Alwood said.

The play features Johnson on his deathbed and chronicles his life through a series of flashbacks.

"It's really an interesting play," Alwood said. "He's incorporated some of the lines directly from the

"It's really an interesting play," Alwood said. "He's incorporated some of the lines directly from the diaries, and it's all very factual."

— Richard Alwood

diaries, and it's all very factual."

Alwood said the cast will include about 11 black men, four black women and 13 white men. Auditions will be at 7 p.m. Friday at the Copiah-Lincoln Community College Washington site.

Alwood said it is the first play performed in Natchez with a majority black cast. He expects a large number of people to turn out for auditions, and said several smaller parts are available for first-time actors.

"You don't have to have any experience for this," said Alwood, who has produced and directed plays with the Natchez Little Theatre. "I just ask that you be willing to work hard, and be willing to try."

Alwood said the cast will have quite a few rehearsals ahead since he only has about six weeks to put the production together.

"And we'll need lots of help with the costumes, too," he said. "I'm hoping I can get some volunteers from the community to help with costumes and the stage."

Although the play is scheduled for only two performances, Alwood said scenes from the play may be incorporated into future productions at the Natchez National Historical Park.

Anyone wanting more information about auditions or the play can call Alwood at 318-757-2787.

2C-NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT, Natchez, Miss.
Lifestyle

Wednesday, April 3, 1991

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TRY-OUTS FOR

"A Gentleman of Color:
William Johnson + His Natchez"

a new play to premiere

May 29 + June 1

during the Natchez Literary Celebration
(11 black men, 4 black women, 13 white men)

7 p.m., Friday, April 5

Co. Lin Auditorium, Washington Site

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI



SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 663

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE CONGRATULATIONS OF THE LEGISLATURE TO THE CITY OF NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI, ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 275TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION.

WHEREAS, Natchez is celebrating the 275th anniversary of its founding in 1716, making it the oldest settlement on the Mississippi River; and

WHEREAS, following its founding by the French and their occupation until 1763, it was subsequently officially occupied by the British from 1763 until 1779, and by the Spanish from 1779 until 1798; and

WHEREAS, Natchez was the first capital of the Mississippi Territory; and

WHEREAS, in the first Constitution of the State of Mississippi adopted in 1817, Natchez was designated the first capital of the state; and

WHEREAS, in the early days of statehood, Natchez was the cultural and financial center of the Old Southwest, making major contributions to the development of the area and the State of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Natchez continues to be a renowned cultural center of international acclaim contributing in numerous ways to the continued growth and prosperity of the State of Mississippi:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MISSISSIPPI STATE SENATE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That the many contributions of the City of Natchez, Mississippi, to this state made during the preceding 275 years be acknowledged, and the State of Mississippi through this resolution extends its congratulations and best wishes to Natchez on the occasion of its birthday celebrated through the 2nd Annual Natchez Literary Celebration sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the National Park Services-Natchez National Historical Park and the Main Street Natchez Partnership festivities to be held May 29-June 1, 1991.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution be forwarded to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Natchez and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
April 26, 1991

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
April 28, 1991

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION

TRAVEL SCHEDULE

for

SPECIAL GUESTS

(lecturers, lecture chairmen, and other special guests)

Also see items on formal schedule of events.

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday

May 29 - June 1, 1991

NOTE: When the vans pick up Special Guests at The Eola, it will be at the Pearl Street entrance.

NOTE TO SPECIAL GUESTS STAYING OVERNIGHT AWAY FROM DOWNTOWN: For all events at The Eola Hotel and for transportation to other events by van to and from The Eola, park your cars in The Eola Parking Lot on Pearl Street across from the hotel entrance. In the daytime you also may use the parking lot on Pearl Street between The Guest House, 200 N. Pearl St., and The Pearl Street Cellar, 211 N. Pearl St. See custom-designed map in packet.

Give the city a gift this year

Here are suggestions from the birthday committee on ways individuals, businesses, civic groups, churches and others may present a gift to the city of Natchez in honor of its 275th birthday to be celebrated on June 1. The partial list comes from one released by the birthday committee.

The first 25 suggestions relate to the birthday party. The rest could be undertaken anytime within the birthday year.

Adopt the birthday party as a spring activity as your organization and volunteer manpower to help at the party, such as:

- Man Coke booths.
- Assist with the hands-on history fair.
- Act as a set-up committee for the history fair.
- Act as a set-up committee for the birthday party.
- Act as a set-up committee for the birthday bash (street dance).
- Act as a clean-up committee for the history fair.
- Act as a clean-up committee for the birthday party.
- Act as a clean-up committee for the birthday bash.
- Sell tickets at the gate for the birthday bash.

Help set up barricades and other things necessary for crowd control and safety.

Bake 240 cupcakes in white or foil paper baking cups. Purchase tickets and sell them for the birthday bash. We need organizations to purchase and sell \$250 in tickets to ensure costs.

- Contribute funds to help underwrite costs of these: Craftsmen, Indians and others at the history fair; Publicity (posters, billboards, newspaper); Party favors (fans, balloons); Large cake, ice cream, napkins; Plywood on which art students will paint birthday cards and greetings for display; Decorations at the gazebo on the bluff; T-shirts with birthday logo; Sing in the choir on the bluff the special song written for the birthday celebration; Make photographs at the celebration for the mood; Decorate a vacant store window in downtown using

Natchez history as a theme.

Come as a group to the birthday party on June 1. Proclaim Natchez History Day.

Hold a community clean-up day.

Plant a tree.

Sponsor an art competition for design of downtown banners.

Sponsor a Natchez song contest.

Stage a community festival.

Re-enact an event in Natchez history.

Write a play about Natchez history.

Write a poem about Natchez history.

Deliver a speech about Natchez history.

Sponsor a program on Natchez history.

Have a groundbreaking or ribbon cutting ceremony highlighting Natchez history.

Conduct a vacant building survey.

Photograph every building in the downtown area.

Prepare a history of a commercial building in downtown.

Sponsor a fund-raiser for a historic building rehabilitation project.

Get local artists or school art departments to paint blank walls or boarded-up vacant buildings.

Publish architectural details on historic buildings in a pamphlet or in the newspaper and make a contest of identification.

Take your group on a walking tour of downtown.

Hold a 275th birthday party of your own.

Publish a retail directory of local businesses.

Have a birthday party sale or promotion.

Publish a special edition of the local newspaper on the Natchez birthday and Natchez history.

Fix up store window displays on Natchez history.

Hold an antebellum costume contest.

Sponsor a William Johnson look-alike contest.

Plan a civic improvement project, such as erecting a nice sign for entrances into the historic district or planting a flowerbed at key entrances.

Sponsor a Miss Natchez contest.

Hold a picnic in the park, on the bluff or on the roof of a downtown building.

Host a patriotic song fest.

Stage a volunteer fair with informational booths for civic and service organizations.

Do something for the public library to help them raise money for automation.

Have a fun festival in downtown with:

- Sack races;
- Bed races;
- Bathub races;
- Bigwheel races;
- Tricycle races;
- Bicycle races;
- Musical chairs;
- Simon says;
- Water balloon toss.

Assist with the Christmas parade.

Work on producing a first-class float for the Christmas parade.

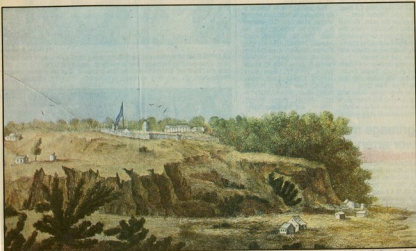
Hold a square dance.

Have an outdoor theater production.

For an outdoor theater production.

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Natchez marks 275 years



The Natchez Democrat/Courtesy Dr. Thomas H. Gandy

THE OLD FORT: Fort Rosalie, established in 1716, marked the beginning of European settlement in Natchez. This early drawing depicts the fort as it appeared in the early 18th century.

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Festival explores history with literature

Literary celebration
coincides with city's
275th birthday party

By JOAN GANDY
The Natchez Democrat

Lectures and special events at the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration will lead participants through 275 years of Natchez history.

And, with a bang, Natchez residents and hundreds of visitors expected for the event will close out the May 29 to June 1 celebration with a birthday party for the city.

"Each event will be another special memory in Natchez history," said Carolyn Vance Smith, one of the literary celebration's coordinators. "And we have people coming literally from all over the world to take part."

Copiah-Lincoln Community College is co-sponsor of the event, along with the National Park Service and Natchez Trace Parkway. Smith, an instructor at the Natchez campus of the college, has lined up lecturers from Europe, Canada and all parts of the United States to come share their research on Natchez history.

"We will have two from Europe — Dr. Alexander Ritter from the University of Hamburg and Dr. Michel Fabre from The Sorbonne in Paris; two from Yale — Dr. John W. Blasingame and Dr. Jay Gullin; and Dr. Michael Wayne of the University of Toronto," she said.

Other lecturers coming from out of town include Dr. Robert Romini of the University of Illinois, Nancy Scott



WILLIAM JOHNSON is the subject of a play debuting at the festival.

Anderson of San Diego, Dr. William K. Scarborough of the University of Southern Mississippi and Patti Carr Black of Jackson.

The lecture series — headquartered at The Natchez Eola Hotel and all free, thanks in part to a \$17,718 grant from the Mississippi Humanities Council — will cover major periods in Natchez history, beginning with the 1716 establishment of Fort Rosalie, making Natchez the oldest settlement on the Mississippi River.

"The lecturers will paint a broad picture as they lecture on Natchez's three centuries of literature, history and culture," Smith said.

"Numerous Natchez natives and visitors will be discussed, including

the Natchez Indians, early French settlers, wealthy planners of the first half of the 19th century, free men of color and famous people such as Virginia Howell Davis, Henry Clay, William Johnson and Richard Wright."

Ritter, for example, will lecture on three centuries of fiction that relates to Natchez, beginning with the 18th-century book, "Atala, a Tale of the Natchez," written by the Frenchman Chateaubriand about the Natchez Indians.

"The Cabin Book," a novel by a German journalist who visited Natchez in the 19th century, is another book that figures in Ritter's talk. To wind up the third century, he will discuss writers such as Richard Wright, Ellen Douglas and Eudora Welty, all authors influenced by Natchez.

Entertainment at the celebration will kick off "where it all began, at Natchez Under-the-Hill," Smith said. On May 29, beginning at 7:30 p.m., the Mississippi Medicine Show will give a performance — free and open to everyone and followed by dutch-treat dining.

Several events center on Natchez's black history, the most prominent being the dedication of the William Johnson House as part of the Natchez National Historical Park. Stuart Johnson, superintendent of the Natchez park, and another coordinator of the literary celebration, has arranged the ceremony that will take place at the State Street house on May 30.

Celebration of the Johnson House dedication will continue with the premiere of a play, "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His

Natchez," to be performed May 29 and June 1.

The play, Smith said, "is excellent and has a large cast." It was written by Dr. Evans Harrington of the University of Mississippi and directed by Richard Alwood of Ferriday, La.

Also on May 29, the Mississippi Symphony Pops Orchestra will present a musical tribute to Natchez's 275 years. "Thanks to so many generous corporate sponsors, the pops concert will be free, too," Smith said. "One of the best things about this year's celebration is that so much of it is free. And the things that require a ticket are very reasonably priced."

Although lectures are free, reservations are suggested because of limited seating at The Eola. Those reservations may be made by calling 442-7341 or by mailing requests to Natchez Literary Celebration, P.O. Box 894, Natchez, Miss. 39121.

"We are getting a wonderful response from people everywhere," Smith said. "We hope local people will hurry and get their reservations in for the lectures so they won't miss out."

Ticketed events include a picnic at Grand Village of the Natchez Indians on May 30 at \$20; the play on May 30 or June 1 at \$10, with a student ticket at \$7; a three-hour Natchez tour with refreshments on May 31 at \$15; a gala evening party at D'Evereux on May 31 at \$20; a tour of Stanton Hall, reception and luncheon on June 1 at \$30; or all of the events at a reduced-price total ticket at \$100, which includes printed materials priced at \$25 if purchased separately.

Natchez's birthday bash promises fun

By JOAN GANDY
The Natchez Democrat

The city's 275th birthday celebration could be pivotal in Natchez history, MainStreet Natchez Partnership Manager Beckie Johnson said. 1991 is a year to reflect on the past and on what can be done to make Natchez a better place in the future.

"If you think about it, 275 years is a long time to be a growing, working community. Natchez is a place tourists come all the time and go away loving the city," she said.

"Now is a good time for us to say, 'wow, we're proud of what we've done,' but also, 'hey, there are things we still need to do.'"

Johnson is among a group of volunteers working to promote the big birthday celebration on June 1. Sandra Burkes is chairman of the event and has put together a program on the Natchez bluffs that will begin at 3 p.m. and continue into the evening, when

"If you think about it, 275 years is a long time to be a growing, working community."

— Beckie Johnson

The Blue Boys, a 15-piece band, will top off the day with a street dance.

The day begins with assorted entertainment on the bluff parallel to Broadway, including exhibitions and demonstrations of Indian basket making, furniture making, weaving, quilting and butter churning.

For children, there will be storytelling, songs, games and buggy rides.

Fireworks, sponsored by Natchez Coca-Cola Co., will begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by cutting of the big Natchez birthday cake and distribution of party favors and the free ice cream and cake. The dance begins at 9 p.m. at the Canal Street Depot. Dance tickets are \$7.50 advance and \$10 at the door.

Johnson said she and others working on the birth-

day party have urged businesses and civic organizations to get involved by doing something special as a birthday gift to the city.

"Gifts of time, energy, commitment and volunteer labor are just as important as gifts of money," she said.

She has suggested activities in which an individual, a family, a church, a school or a church might participate. MainStreet Natchez will act as a clearing house for projects to avoid duplication and keep activities organized, she said.

Natchez musician and teacher Alvin Shelby has written a birthday song for Natchez, and some school children have rehearsed the song to sing at the bluff party.

"We hope the children and some church choirs will join together to sing the song," Johnson said. "And I have cassette tapes of the song in case some groups want to learn it so they can sing along."

"We hope everyone will be involved. This is for everyone," she said.

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Smith

Continued from Page 1A

"And you should see the list of names of people who are helping with this year's celebration. There must be 300 who have volunteered," Smith said. The 1991 Literary Celebration will be May 29 through June 1 and will culminate with a salute to Natchez on its 275 anniversary.

"Both the Natchez Literary Celebration and the elderhostel program were sell-outs, proving so popular that they are being repeated in 1991. Both events prove there's cash in culture."

— Brad Chism

Billy Thames, president of Copiah-Lincoln, said the award is a big honor for the school, too.

"I am pleased because Carolyn Lin said the award is a big honor for the school, too."

ten so much out of the programs, and Natchez and Adams County have, too."

In addition to Smith's awards, two other Natchezians were finalists for other tourism-related

awards.

Deblieux, director of Bobby Pilgrimage Tours, was a state finalist in the Community Achievement Awards for his Victorian Christmas in Natchez program in 1990.

Ora Frazier was a finalist in the Governor's Tourism Volunteer Awards for her work in writing and producing "Southern Road to Freedom," the Pilgrimage season musical, presented by Holy Family Catholic Church combined choirs.

Smith honored for tourism achievement

By JOAN GANDY
The Natchez Democrat

Carolyn Vance Smith of Natchez has won the prestigious 1990 Governor's Award for Tourism Achievement in Mississippi and was honored Friday in Biloxi at a statewide tourism meeting.

Smith, director of public information and English instructor at Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez, won the award for her organization in 1990 of the first annual Natchez Literary Celebration, sponsored in part by the college, and of the college's first-ever elderhostel program.

Both events drew new visitors to Natchez but also generated



nationwide publicity for the city. The literary celebration, held June 7-9, coincided with the dedication of the Natchez National Historical Park at Melrose. The elderhostel program was a week-long event held in November and repeated in December.

"Both the Natchez Literary Celebration and the elderhostel program were sell-outs, proving so popular that they are being repeated in 1991," said Brad Chism in the nomination of Smith.

Chism is executive director of the Natchez-Adams County Convention and Visitors Bureau. "Both events prove there's cash in culture," he said.

Smith, when contacted Friday, said the award is "a wonderful honor for Natchez." She praised the large number of people who made both the literary celebration and the elderhostel program successful.

See SMITH, Page 10A

Saturday, May 11, 1991

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Historic Natchez celebrates

■ From May 29 through June 1, Natchez blows its own literary and historical horn.

By Leslie R. Myers
Clarion-Ledger Staff Writer

This year's theme of the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration writes itself.

The four-day event set in the jewel of the South will be dedicated to the city's 275th birthday.

Founded as a French trading post in 1716, Natchez is the oldest settlement on the Mississippi River. It generated a wealthy legacy of literature, culture and American history.

All those avenues will be explored from Wednesday, May 29, through Saturday, June 1, in the literary fest. Its theme is "From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates its 275th Anniversary."

The event will be headquartered in the Natchez Eola Hotel, although some activities will happen at several historic sites.

"We're thrilled to have scholars, writers, musicians and other talented people here from Europe, Canada and across the United States," said celebration coordinator Carolyn Vance Smith. "It will be an educational event that has a lot of related fun and entertainment — all based on the big 275th anniversary."

Former Gov. William Winter will serve as emcee.

The latest word on Natchez' Southern literary legacy will be offered by scholars from Jackson to Germany.

The celebration also will feature natives of accomplishment: The prolific Ayres-Haxton



Melrose

family, the late novelist Richard Wright and the late William Johnson.

Johnson, a former slave whose 2,000-page diary has been published, will be honored May 30 in a speech about free men of color before 1861; the dedication of his Natchez home, an 1841 Greek Revival townhouse owned by the black freed man, to the National Park Service; and (also on June 1) with performances of *A Gentleman of Color* by William Johnson and *His Natchez* by Evans Harrington.

On the morning of June 1, English professor Michel Fabre of The Sorbonne in Paris, will lecture on "Richard Wright in Natchez: An Enduring Connection." Wright spent his later years in Paris.

The afternoon of June 1 will focus on the Ayres-Haxton family of Natchez. Their ancestor, Samuel Brooks, was the city's first mayor.

Ellen Douglas (the pen name for Josephine Ayres Haxton) of Jackson will read from her award-winning novels and survey how Natchez' history and landscape influenced her work.

Her former husband, acclaimed composer Kenneth Haxton of Greenville, has set one of her poems to music; it will be performed by a vocalist, pianist, oboist and cellist.

Their three sons also will speak. State Rep. Ayres Haxton, who manages the family's 180-

See NATCHEZ, 3D

TUESDAY, MAY 21, 1991

SOUTHERN STYLE

THE CLARION-LEDGER ■ JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

Natchez

From 1D

near-old farm in Natchez, will survey the family's history and legacy. Peet Brooks Haxton of New York will read poems about Natchez or its people that have appeared in his books. A presentation by composer Richard Haxton of Los Angeles will focus on five songs he wrote about Natchez.

The agenda also flashes back to the era of American statesman and orator Henry Clay.

"Henry Clay came to Natchez many, many times and had lots of supporters here," Smith said.

On the morning of May 31, noted Clay scholar and writer Robert Remini of Illinois will retrace Clay's Natchez connections.

That night, a gala reception — billed as "Come In, Please, Mr. Clay" — will be held at the historic mansion D'Evereux. The party of food, drink and music will be modeled after an 1842 reception held in

that mansion for Clay.

"Everything will be period — from flower designs to carriages out front," Smith said. "It (the actual 1842 party) has been researched to a fare-thee-well."

Smith is coordinator of the English department at Copiah-Lincoln Community College. Co-Lin and the National Park Service sponsor the celebration. Funding is from the National Endowment for the Humanities through the Mississippi Humanities Council.

Admission is free to all lectures, to a Mississippi Symphony Orchestra May 29 pops concert, the William Johnson House dedication and reception, a May 31 autograph

party with all lecturers, a May 31 flower show, June 1 tours of Melrose mansion and the fireworks finale — an outdoor birthday party for Natchez on the night of June 1. Among free events, reservations are required only for the lectures.

Tickets must be purchased for other events. They include: \$20 for a May 30 picnic at Grand Village of the Natchez Indians; \$10 adults, \$7 students for performances of *Gentleman*; \$15 for a May 31 tour of three homes; \$20 for a tour and luncheon at Stanton Hall. A discount ticket package also is available.

For reservations or information, call 1-800-647-6742 or 442-7341.

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Announcements

St. Mary's Catholic Church annual blood drive is from 2 to 9 p.m. Thursday May 30 at St. Theresa Hall.

Reservations for 12 free lectures during the Natchez Literary Celebration May 29 to June 1 may be made by calling 442-7341, 446-6631 or 442-9111. Theme of the conference is "Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary." Speakers are internationally known historians.

Tickets for low-cost events related to a series of free lectures during the Natchez Literary Celebration May 29 to June 1 are available by calling 442-7341, 446-6631 or 442-9111. Events include a picnic at Grand Village on May 30, a three-house tour on May 31 and a gala party at D'Evereux on May 31.

A free concert, "275 Years of Natchez's Favorite Music" will be performed at 6 p.m. May 29 at the Natchez City Auditorium by the Mississippi Symphony Pops Orchestra. The concert will kick off Natchez's 275th anniversary celebration.

Tickets for "A Free Man of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez," a new play by Dr. Evans Harrington of the University of Mississippi, are available by calling 442-7341, 446-6631 or 442-9111. Performances are 8:30 p.m. May 30 and 3 p.m. June 1. Tickets are \$10 general admission and \$7 for students of any age.

The Adams County Speech Therapy Association annual summer speech clinic will be held at Pleasant Acre Day School. For more information contact Ruth Ayres at 442-9376.

The Retired Senior Volunteer Program needs senior citizens to serve as volunteer receptionists. For more information call, 442-5082.

The Natchez Middle School PTA presents a Basketball Blowout with NMS Faculty vs. NMS Adopters, Amoco Petroleum, West Funeral Home, at 6 p.m. Friday at NMS gym. Admission is \$1 for adults and 50 cents for students. To sign up for the PTA team, Call Thelma Taylor at

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The Natchez Democrat

THURSDAY, MAY 23, 1991

Serving Natchez, Vidalia and the Miss-Lou

Natchez, Miss.

50 CENTS

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The Natchez Democrat/Editor Grant Kiser

REMEMBERING THE HERITAGE: Jim Barnett, who poses here with a Natchez Indian artifact, says the first residents of this area will not be forgotten in the upcoming literary symposium on Natchez history.

Indians not forgotten in celebration

By JOAN GANDY

The Natchez Democrat

Natchez's earliest inhabitants will not be forgotten when scholars gather next week for the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration.

Jim Barnett, site director of Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, says those early residents of the area played a bigger role in the city's history than most people realize.

As one of more than a dozen lecturers at the May 29 through June 1 event, Barnett will reveal complicated relationships between the natives and Europeans who settled in 1716 in what is now Natchez on the bluffs of the Mississippi River.

"In my opinion and in the opinion of a number of archaeologists and historians, the French never would have settled here had it not been for the Indians," Barnett said.

Descriptions of Natchez with its lofty bluffs and clean air frequently appear in explanations of why the French settled at Natchez. Barnett said, however, that many other places along the river had those same characteristics.

"Quite simply, the French settlers weren't able to make it by themselves in the wilderness."

That is not to say the French did not reciprocate. "The French had something to offer, too — metal tools, including guns and iron pots," he said. "Indians hunted for the French, traded their crops and helped them to build their houses."

Along with Barnett, lecturers at the literary celebration will follow the theme, "From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary." It is sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the National Park Service and assisted in part by a grant from the Mississippi Humanities Council.

All lectures will be at The Natchez Inn Hotel, head-

See INDIANS, Page 8A

The Miss-Lou

Indians

Continued from Page 1A

quarters for the event. The lectures are free, but reservations are required because of the limited seating. More information about the lectures is available by calling 442-7431.

Topics will include Natchez's relationship with the "Creole World," prominent works of fiction set in Natchez, Natchez's black history and themes centering on some famous people who visited or lived in Natchez.

Barnett's lecture on the Natchez Indians will be followed by a trip to the Grand Village for those who purchase \$20 tickets for lunch and entertainment at the historic site. There will be Indian music, crafts and food.

Natchez Indians were a sophisticated tribe in many ways, Barnett said. They evolved from Indians who had settled in the region 10,000 to 15,000 years ago.

"Many Indian cultures rose and fell, flourished and then gave way to others," Barnett said. "The Natchez tribe, dating to about 1200, was the last major group in this area and had all those previous cultures to draw on. They were expert in making a living off the area."

Frenchmen gave the tribe the name Natchez, but Barnett said the way it happened is not clear. "The Natchez called themselves Thacoel. How we got to Natchez is something we can only speculate about."

The Indians were living in loosely organized villages, he said, and each small community had its name. The community at the Grand Village was called something simi-

lar to the name Natchez.

"Eventually it became the name of the outpost," he said.

The story of how the Natchez Indians attacked the French fort in 1729 and were a year later annihilated by French troops has been told many times. It continues to be a tragic story, Barnett said.

Nevertheless, people tend to over-romanticize the Indian life, he said. For one thing, the notion that they were super-conservationists is not true in his opinion.

"With the same technology that we have had, they probably would

have leveled the place," Barnett said. "Their technology was simply more ecology friendly."

Another important thing to remember is that Indians had lived on the huge continent for 15,000 years with no intervention. In other parts of the world, cities were emerging. "The rest of the world was moving toward civilization,"

The Indians who came to be known as Natchez were farmers and hunters. They raised crops, hunted small mammals, fished in the many streams in the area and gathered berries and nuts.

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page 43

Pops concert opens literary celebration events Wednesday

A free concert on Wednesday by the Mississippi Symphony Pops Orchestra will set the tone for the colorful second annual Natchez Literary Celebration.

The celebration, running Wednesday through Saturday next week, features a number of free events and centers on marking the 275th birthday of Natchez.

The free pops concert, featuring "275 Years of Natchez's Favorite Music," will be at 6 p.m. in the Natchez City Auditorium and will be followed by a Dutch-treat supper at Natchez Under-the-Hill.

Sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the National Park Service, the literary celebration has a lineup of more than a dozen lecturers coming from as far away as Europe and Canada as well as from all across the United States.

Lecturers are well-known in their fields of history, literature or the arts. Their programs, all to be presented at The Natchez Eola Hotel, are free but require reservations because of limited seating.

Other free events — in addition to the pops concert and the lectures — include a performance of the Mississippi Medicine Show on Wednesday at 8 p.m. at Natchez Under-the-Hill.

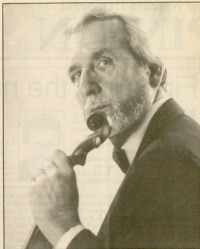
The free pops concert, featuring "275 Years of Natchez's Favorite Music," will be at 6 p.m. in the Natchez City Auditorium.

The Medicine Show is a take-off on the oldtime traveling medicine shows and features Natchez singers, dancers and actors. The troupe has performed for audiences all over the United States.

Another free event during the literary celebration will be dedication of the William Johnson House to the National Park Service on Thursday at 5:30 p.m. The Johnson House, 210 State St., was purchased by the Natchez Garden Club in 1976 and has been preserved by the club since that time. It will be the second property to become a part of the Natchez National Historical Park.

William Johnson was a prominent free black man in the early 19th century. A barber, he kept a detailed diary about daily life in the city then.

The dedication will include a reception hosted by the garden club



Special to The Natchez Democrat

TO PERFORM WEDNESDAY: Robert McNally, concertmaster with the Mississippi Symphony Pops Orchestra

and a performance by the Holy Family Catholic Church Gospel Choir.

On Friday, the free events continue with a flower show and tea at antebellum D'Evereux, sponsored by the Pilgrimage Garden Club. On June 1, the National Park Ser-

vice will conduct free tours of Melrose all day — 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. And the day will conclude with a birthday party for the entire city to be held on the bluffs at 5 p.m.

Anyone interested in reservations or more information should call 442-7341.

Natchez Literary Celebration

Sunday, May 26, 1991

The Natchez Democrat

Natchez, Mississippi

4 pages

Rich Natchez culture focus of celebration of 275th anniversary

Fireworks, music and entertainment will climax a four-day celebration of Natchez's 275th birthday and the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration.

"From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates its 275th Anniversary" gets under way on Wednesday and continues through Saturday, when fireworks are expected to gather for fireworks and a birthday bash on the banks of the historic city.

Central to the literary festival are five scholarly lectures presented daily at The Natchezicola Hotel, headquarters for the event, sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the National Park Service.

"This is an event to pull the whole town together," said Carolyn Vance Smith, literary director at Co-Lin and one of the coordinators of the event. Other coordinators are Stuart Johnson, manager of the Natchez National Historical Park, and Rocky Junkin Nevill, also on the faculty at Co-Lin.

The five lectures are sponsored in part by a \$17,118 grant from the Mississippi Humanities Council.

In June 1990, Co-Lin sponsored the first literary celebration in con-

junction with the dedication of antebellum Monroe as the Natchez National Historical Park. This year, the celebration will include dedication of the second park property, the William Johnson House.

The Johnson House, built as his residence by a free black man in the 1840s, will be the scene of a reception held by the Natchez Garden Club, which bought the Johnson House in 1976 and is credited with saving the house from ruin.

Johnson's life also has inspired a play that will be performed twice during the literary festival. Written by Dr. Evans Harrington of the University of Mississippi and partially funded by a \$2,500 grant from the Mississippi Arts Commission, the play will be presented on Thursday at 8:30 p.m. and on Saturday at 3 p.m. in the Natchez High School auditorium.

Lectures begin at 4 p.m. on Wednesday at The Natchezicola Hotel, headquarters for the literary celebration, and continue through Saturday. Lectures are:

"Natchez on the Mississippi: An Illustrated History," by Dr. David Sapping, University of Mississippi, and Sam Calton, Natchez.

"Chronicle on the Chisholm Trail: Natchez and the Creek

World of the Mississippi Valley," by Dr. Jay Golia of Yale University.

"Natchez as the Setting in Fiction for Three Centuries: Variations of a Literary Regionality," by Dr. Alexander Riten, University of Hamburg, Germany.

"The Grand Village of the Natchez on Indian" and "The True Story of the Aaron Burr Oaks," by James F. Barnett II, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Natchez.

"Lords or Captains? Some Reflections on the Natchez Mikasa," by Dr. William E. Scarborough, University of Southern Mississippi.

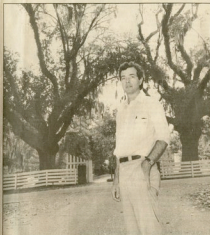
"Three Men of Color in the South Before 1861," by Dr. John W. Blasingame, Yale University.

"Research on William Johnson," by Dr. Sue Baker of Buffalo, La. "Natchez by New York: Varian Howell Davis as Home," by Nancy Scott Anderson, San Diego, Calif.

"Heavy Clay and the Natchez Connection," by Dr. Robert Komis, University of Illinois.

"The Reshaping of Plantation Society," by Dr. Michael Wynn, University of Toronto, Canada.

"Romance in Natchez: the Setting for Caroline Fernald Nevill," See B-17A, Page 4



The Natchez Democrat/Photo: Robert Riten

MYTHICAL OAKS: Jim Barnett stands in front of the misnamed "Aaron Burr Oaks" at Historic Jefferson College. Barnett will tell the story of the oaks on Friday.

Lecturers' education, experience give impressive tone to event

Speakers lined up for the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration. Miss

issippi River.

More in a brief while who on the



nesses to the company.
Calton is an amateur photogra-

American history and the subordi-
nation of America.
March 1990 from 1990. The Natchez

1991 part 1
page 4/5

The Natchez Democrat

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 1991

Serving Natchez, Vidalia and the Miss-Low

Natchez, Miss.

50 CENTS

Literary Celebration opens

The second annual Natchez Literary Celebration gets under way in Natchez today, leading participants through 273 years of Natchez history.

Natchez residents and hundreds of visitors expected for the celebration will close out the four-day event with a Saturday birthday party for the city.

"Each event will be another special memory in Natchez history," said Carolyn Vance Smith, one of the literary celebration's coordinators. "And we have people coming literally from all over the world to take part."

Copiah-Lincoln Community College is co-sponsor of the event, along with the National Park Service and the Natchez National Historical Park. Smith, an instructor at the Natchez campus of the college, and her co-chairmen have lined up lecturers from Europe, Canada and all parts of the United States to cover their research on Natchez history.

Co-chairmen with Smith are Becky Junkin

"And we have people coming literally from all over the world to take part."

— Carolyn Vance Smith

Nevill, also a Co-Lin instructor, and Susan Johnson, manager of the national park at Natchez.

Among distinguished lecturers who will present programs beginning today are Dr. Alexander Hays from the University of Illinois and Dr. Michael Perman from The College of Paris, two from Yale University, Dr. John W. Blasingame and Dr. Jay Glavin and Dr. Michael Weaver of the University of Toronto.

Other lecturers coming from out of town include Dr. Robert Ransel of the University of Illinois, Nancy Suss Anderson of San Diego, Dr. David Searing of the University of Mississippi, Dr. William K. Scarborough of the University of Southern Mississippi and Pam Carr

Black of Jackson.

Lecturers from Natchez include Sam Calton, James P. Burton Jr. and Alice Walworth Graham. Also on the program are members of the Haxson family — Ayres Haxson of Natchez, Josephine Haxson of Natchez and Jackson, Kenneth Haxson of Greenville, Richard Haxson of Los Angeles and Brooks Haxson of Brewster, N.Y.

The lecture series — headquartered at The Natchez National Historical Park — thanks in part to a \$17,718 grant from the Mississippi Humanities Council — will cover major periods in Natchez history, beginning with the 1719 establishment of Fort Rosette, marking Natchez the oldest settlement on the Mississippi River.

Entertainment in the celebration will begin today with a free concert by the Mississippi Symphony Pops Orchestra at 6 p.m. in the City Auditorium. Music will follow the birthday theme, "273 Years of Natchez's Favorites."

See LITERARY, Page 8A.



The Natchez Democrat's Carolyn Vance Smith, Becky Junkin and Susan Johnson.

READY TO CELEBRATE: Chairmen Becky Junkin Nevill, Susan Johnson and Carolyn Vance Smith have everything ready for the literary celebration.

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Literary

Continued from Page 1A

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Literary Celebration great Natchez event

Another big event gets under way in Natchez today with the second annual Literary Celebration. The city has put out the welcome mat in its usual style, and some excellent activities both for visitors and home folks are planned.

Today, for instance, two outstanding entertainments will be offered free — one, a symphony performance at the City Auditorium, where the Jackson Pops will present "275 Years of Natchez's Favorite Music"; another, the performance of Natchez's own rootin', tootin' troupe, the Mississippi Medicine Show, at Natchez Under-the-Hill later in the evening.

The Literary Celebration has something for everyone, from scholarly lectures on Natchez history to a picnic on the grounds of Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, where some authentic Indian foods will be served.

Congratulations to all who organized the event and to the sponsoring agents, Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the National Park Service.

Natchez Literary Celebration

Reservations for 12 free lectures during the Natchez Literary Celebration May 29 to June 1 may be made by calling 442-7341, 446-6631 or 442-9111. Theme of the conference is "Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary." Speakers are internationally known writers and historians.

"275 years of Natchez's Favorite Music" a free concert by the Mississippi Symphony Pops Orchestra is at 6 p.m. today in the City Auditorium.

Dedication of the William Johnson House to the Natchez National Historical Park is at 5:30 p.m. Thursday at the house, 210 State St. The ceremony is open to the public, and a free reception will follow.

"Celebrating Natchez's 275th Birthday through History and Horticulture" is from 2 to 4 p.m. Friday at D'Evereux. The flower show is sponsored by the Pilgrimage Garden Club and is open to the public.

"A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez" will not be performed Friday or Saturday. The play will be presented later this year. Those who bought tickets may request a total refund, apply the ticket price to the later performance or donate the money to the literary celebration.

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PGC flower show celebrates city's 275-year history in horticulture

Historic D'Evereux will be the setting for the Pilgrimage Garden Club's annual flower show Friday.

The show, titled "Natchez, 1716-1991, Celebrating the City's 275th Anniversary through History and Horticulture," will be held in conjunction with the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration.

The celebration is co-sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the Natchez National Historical Park.

Mimi Hinson is chairman for the show, and Suzanne Clifford is co-chairman.

The flower show designs at D'Evereux will attempt to recreate the way the mansion might have looked when Henry Clay was entertained there in the 1840s by the Elliott Family, owners of the mansion.

The mansion is now home to Mrs. T.B. Buckles and Mr. and Mrs. Jack Benson. Mrs. Buckles and Mrs. Benson are members of the Pilgrimage Garden Club.

Displays in the show will be open for viewing from 2 to 4 p.m. Friday, and the public is invited. Later, the designs will in a reception for literary celebration participants. The reception, "Come In, Please, Mr. Clay," will be modeled after the reception held for Clay in 1842. Tickets are required, and anyone interested in purchasing one may call 442-7341.

Entries in the horticulture division will be received from 3 to 6 p.m. Thursday at D'Evereux. Extremely tender and fragile horticulture will be received from 8 to 10 a.m. on Friday. Entries in the design division

See PGC, Page 3C

PGC

Continued from Page 1C

may be arranged in place in D'Evereux from 3 to 6 p.m. Thursday and either arranged or received from 8 to 10 a.m. Friday.

Design and horticulture entries for junior and high school gardeners will be received from 3 to 6 p.m. Thursday and from 8 to 10 a.m. Friday on the back gallery of D'Evereux.

Judging will be at 11 a.m. Friday by flower show judges.

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The Natchez Democrat/Kate Magandy

NATCHEZ'S FAVORITE MUSIC: Concertmaster Robert M. McNally directs the Mississippi Symphony Pops Orchestra in a concert featuring 275 years of Natchez's favorite music. The Wednesday evening concert was part of the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration which continues today with a series of lectures and the dedication of the William Johnson House to the Natchez National Historical Park. The ceremony, which is open to the public, begins at 5:30 p.m. at the house, 201 State St.

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Natchez Literary Celebration

Symphony
concert
highlights
first day

3A



2A*THE NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT, Natchez, Miss.

Thursday, May 30, 1991

Johnson House will be dedicated today

The William Johnson House will be dedicated to the Natchez National Historical Park today at 5:30 p.m. It is the second step in moving the Natchez park toward a concept that will encompass much of the city's history.

The Johnson House will provide a vehicle for interpreting black history and will complement other efforts the National Park Service may pursue in the future. The dedication ceremony is open to all. A big crowd of Natchez folks should be there to show their support for this project.

Natchez Literary Celebration

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The Natchez Democrat

50 CENTS

Natchez, Miss.

Serving Natchez, Vidalia and the Miss-Low

FRIDAY, MAY 31, 1991

Natchez celebrates birthday

Party on bluff rounds out fun

By STACY GRANING
The Natchez Democrat

Natchez folks will celebrate 275 years of heritage Saturday with a giant birthday party on the bluffs.

"It's going to be loads of fun," said Katie McCarstle, co-chairman of the 275th Birthday Bash celebration.

The party is being sponsored by the Natchez MainStreet Partnership with cooperation from the city of Natchez, the Historic Natchez Foundation and the Natchez Literary Celebration.

The birthday party begins at 3 p.m. with a hands-on history fair on the bluffs. The afternoon will be filled with free entertainment for children of all ages, with exhibitions, demonstrations, storytelling and more, said McCarstle, who is organizing the event with Ronnie Cox of Dimple's.

"We're hoping this will bring everybody downtown, and encourage them to support our city," she said. "And this is no charge for any of this."

Food booths will be set up at the festival site, including selections of prime rib sandwiches, hamburgers and hot dogs from King's Tavern.

At 6:30 p.m., the city-wide birthday celebration continues with the cutting of a giant cake, topped with 2,000 servings of ice cream donated by the local Dairy Queen store.

"There will be special music, party favors, birthday cards and presents for the city of Natchez," McCarstle said.

At dusk, Natchez Coca-Cola will light up the skies with a fantastic fireworks display, she added.

See CELEBRATE, Page 8A

Celebrate

Continued from Page 1A

"Now the birthday party and the fireworks display are on the bluffs, and both are free," McCarstle said.

After the fireworks display, the party will move to the Canal Street Depot where the Bluz Boys, a 15-piece show band, will star in a street dance to benefit the Natchez Christmas Parade.

"All the money from the dance helps to fund the Natchez Christmas parade, which the MainStreet Partnership is going to sponsor this year," McCarstle said. "And you know the Christmas Parade is really for the children, so by coming out you are doing something for the children."

Tickets for the dance are \$7.50 in

advance and \$10 at the gate, and McCarstle encouraged purchasing tickets early.

"We are going to have this dance regardless of the weather," she said, adding that pavillion area of the depot is covered from the elements.

Tickets for the street dance are available at the Natchez-Adams County Chamber of Commerce; Britton & Koonz First National Bank; the River Boat Gift Shop; Dimple's; Kimbrell Office Supply; the Historic Natchez Foundation; Dianne's Frame Shop; the Crab Apple Pantry; The Natchez Eola Hotel; Fat Mama's Tamales; You Name It; Darby's; Brown Barnett Dixon's Fine Gifts; the Under-the-Hill Saloon; X-Press Your Cotton; and Deposit Guaranty National Bank.

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Johnson House dedicated

By JOY RIGGS

The Natchez Democrat

Nearly 300 people gathered at The Canal Street Depot on Thursday afternoon for the dedication of the William Johnson House to the Natchez National Historical Park.

"This is a momentous occasion for me," said Mary Louise Miller, a Johnson descendant who lived in the house until 1976. "Today is extra special because the United States is honoring this man of color by making his house a national museum."

Keynote speaker Robert Nunn, the special assistant to the director of the National Park Service, said that if it hadn't been for the efforts of the Natchez Garden Club and its affiliate, the Preservation Society of Ellicott Hill, the house and its connection with the past might have been destroyed.

"When the restoration of the house is completed, it will communicate not only the William Johnson story, but other aspects of black history," he said.

He thanked Margaret Moss, chairman of the William Johnson House committee, and Grace MacNeil of the Natchez Garden Club, for their important roles in preserving the house. He also thanked the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, the Mississippi Congressional delegation, the city of Natchez and Copiah-Lincoln Community College for their involvement.

MacNeil, in a brief speech, said the dedication wouldn't have been possible without the efforts of the late Marie Graves, who was involved in the house preservation.

Johnson was born a slave in 1809 and was freed in 1820. Known as the Barber of Natchez, he kept a diary that now provides the most complete account of the life of a free black in the antebellum South.

Johnson built the house in 1841. He was murdered in 1851 over a



The Natchez Democrat photo/Robert Nunn, presiding over the dedication of the William Johnson House on Thursday in place of former Gov. William Winter. Listening to Johnson are, from left, Natchez Mayor David Armstrong, Robert L. Nunn, Dr. Sue Eakin, Grace MacNeil, Dr. Billy B. Thames, Ed Cole, and Margaret Moss.

DEDICATION CEREMONIES: Stuart Johnson, manager of the Natchez National Historical Park, presides over the dedication of the William Johnson House on Thursday in place of former Gov. William Winter. Listening to Johnson are, from left, Natchez Mayor David Armstrong, Robert L. Nunn, Dr. Sue Eakin, Grace MacNeil, Dr. Billy B. Thames, Ed Cole, and Margaret Moss.

land dispute. His descendants sold the house in 1976 to the Natchez Garden Club. The house was eventually purchased by the city of Natchez and donated to the National Park Service.

Sue Eakin, a historian who has researched Johnson's life, said the dedication of the house was the beginning of a movement to present a more complete history of the South, including all its complexities and people.

"It tells a powerful story of a proud and vigorous people who had the strength and fortitude to work toward freedom, even under slavery, which no man could check," she said.

On behalf of her cousin Spencer Griggs and other Johnson descendants, Miller announced the donation by the family of Johnson's personal bed and two bookcases to the National Park Service.

After a symbolic exchange of

See JOHNSON, Page 1A



SINGING IN CELEBRATION: Members of the Holy Family Catholic Church choir sing during dedication ceremonies on Thursday.

EA'THE NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT, Natchez, Miss.
The Miss-Lou

Friday, May 31, 1991

Johnson

Continued from Page 1A

the deed to the house by MacNeil, Mayor David Armstrong and Nunn, the crowd was entertained by the Holy Family Catholic Church Choir. A reception followed in The Depot courtyard.

Officials in attendance included Rep. Ayles Haxson, D-Natchez, Rep. Barney Schohy, D-Natchez,

Board of Supervisors President Phillip West, Billy Thames, president of Copiah-Lincoln Community College, and Albert Hilliard, director of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

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STATE

THE CLARION-LEDGER ■ JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI



**DANNY
McKENZIE**

Columnist
The Clarion-Ledger

Would-be writer fits into gathering of already-greats

NATCHEZ — Rick Hartzog fired up another Camel — the real kind; no filter, don't you know — and surveyed the gaggle of people milling about the lobby of the Eola Hotel.

A chance, he said. That's what this is. — A lot of folks are here this week to celebrate the 275th birthday of this wonderful river town — and the second Natchez Literary Festival.

More than 1,000 have signed up for the various lectures, discussions and the inevitable parties — all in the name of the rather remarkable Natchez literary heritage.

While it is most appropriate, not to mention entertaining, to pay homage to Natchez Literature Past, Hartzog represents Natchez Literature Future. Well, for that matter, Hartzog qualifies at Natchez Literature Present.

This guy — this 32-year-old college junior to be — can flat write. The recent graduate of Co-lin-Lincoln Community College — 4.0 student in landscape technology — knows a whole lot of words and always seems to put them in the right order.

From Co-Lin to State

After two years of winning nearly every kind of plaque in the Mississippi Community College Creative Writing Contest, Hartzog recently learned he'd also won the Eugene Butler Scholarship in creative writing at Mississippi State, where he will major in landscape architecture.

"What that means is he'll be able to continue doing the two things he loves best: work with nature and work with words.

"This is the happiest I've ever been," he declared. "For the past two years, I feel like I've been blessed."

Considering his first 30, that might very well be the case. Maybe not as, uh, interesting, but certainly as satisfying.

When Hartzog graduated from New Hebron High School in 1976, the first thing he did was spend five months walking the Appalachian Trail — from Georgia to Maine.

Then life picked up.

He worked in Atlanta and Fort Collins, Colo., for a few years, then hired on a survey crew for various oil exploration companies — a job that took him all over the Far West.

Hartzog was married, fathered a child and divorced. He lived the hard life and all it entails.

"In early 1987 I just decided I couldn't keep going the way I was going," he said. "I figured it was best for me to just come on back to the house."

The house is in Silver Creek, just east of Monticello. After a couple of years of plumbing, carpentry, roofing and whatnot, Hartzog found out he was qualified for a federal grant and enrolled at Co-Lin.

Every day for the past two years, he has made the 200-mile round trip to Co-Lin's Natchez campus where the landscape technology classes were offered. He never missed a day.

Always writing

And he wrote, just as he has done for as far back as he can remember. Poetry, short stories, essays, plays — you name it. He's even written a book, which he says "is kind of dead-ended right now."

His first published work came when he was in the fourth grade. *Highlights*, a national magazine for children, picked up one of his poems and Hartzog knew then he would always write.

Once, during high school, he got bored with writing the usual book reports, so he made up a book and the author, and wrote about it.

His teacher — "a really sweet elderly lady" — read it to the class and, he said, "told them that's how book reports should be done."

That was then; this is now.

Hartzog is here, helping out and taking in the literary festival. Last year, Eudora Welty was here. This year's main attraction is Ellen Douglas. There are, of course, many other writers and scholars meandering about.

"For me, this is a chance to rub shoulders with people who have already earned their



William Johnson
dedication

1991

see culture on dish.

FRIDAY, MAY 31, 1991

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The Miss-Lou

Director postpones the premiere of play based on Johnson's life

The premiere performance of "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez" has been postponed and will not be held during the Natchez Literary Celebration this week as planned.

Director Richard Alwood said the play, written by Evans Harrington of the University of Mississippi, will premiere later this year.

"It is an excellent play, a beautiful play and all the cast members are dedicated to doing this play," Alwood said.

Roy Shelby, cast in the starring role of William Johnson, was called to active duty as a military reservist after rehearsals began, Alwood said.

A substitution was made but Alwood decided on Saturday that the cast had not had ample time to make the change. "They all agreed wholeheartedly with the decision to postpone," he said.

Those who have purchased tickets for the play, which was to be performed twice — on Thursday at 8:30 p.m. and on Saturday at 3 p.m. — have three options, Alwood said.

The options are a total refund; keeping the ticket for use later this year when the play is performed; or making a donation of the ticket cost to the literary celebration.

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May, 1991

Country Roads

ADVENTURES CLOSE TO HOME



1991 part 1
page 56

Miss-Lou

Carolyn Smith
Co-Lin/Natchez Campus
Natchez, MS 39120

FREE COPY

NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI

MAY 1991

City of Natchez prepares for 275th birthday celebration June 1

The City of Natchez is celebrating its 275th birthday in 1991 and planning has begun for a citywide celebration to be held on June 1 at the conclusion of the Natchez Literary Festival. An afternoon and evening of special events are scheduled, including a history fair, an official birthday party complete with cake and ice cream, a fireworks display, and a street dance and concert.

Sandra Burkes, chairperson for the birthday bash, said, "We are eager to encourage the support and participation of everyone in Natchez all clubs, organizations, schools and churches. It's a wonderful way to celebrate 275 years of our history. We want Natchezians to select some project or activity

and undertake it as a birthday gift to the city."

Co-chairperson for the birthday planning is Beckie Johnson, who is also director of the Main Street Partnership. Johnson added, "Many of these gifts from civic groups could come in the form of volunteering time or suggesting activities for the celebration itself. Or groups could make a more permanent gift to the city, such as adopting an entrance to the town and planting and maintaining a certain space on an annual basis."

To coordinate activities and projects, volunteers can mail their plans to 275th Birthday, P.O. Box 1462, Natchez, MS 39121 or call 445-4611. Here

is a schedule of some of the major events planned for the birthday celebration:

275th Birthday

June 1, 1991

Broadway Street on the bluffs

• 3 p.m.—Hands on History Fair. An afternoon of fun for kids of all ages, with exhibitions and demonstrations from throughout our 275 glorious years: Indian Basket Making; Buck Skinners; Flint Nappers; Civil War Renactors; Black Smithing; Furniture Making; Weaving; Pottery Making; Quilting and Butter Churning.

In addition, there'll be storytelling, children's songs and games from long ago, portrayals of William Johnson,

and other famous Natchez characters, buggy rides and much more.

• 6:30 p.m.—275th Birthday Party and Fireworks. A citywide celebration with music, party favors, ice cream and cake for everyone (free), and dozens of presents for the City of Natchez. At dusk Natchez Coca-Cola will sponsor a spectacular fireworks display over the River.

• 9 p.m.—Natchez "Birthday Bash" Street Dance. The Blue Boys, a 15 piece Rhythm and Blues Review, will top off the celebration from the Canal Street Depot. This show band features all the music from the famous John Belushi/Dan Aykroyd duo and that unforgettable Memphis R&B sound.

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Natchez literary festival returns

by Carolyn Vance Smith

A major milestone in the history of the ancient river port of Natchez, Miss., will be noted numerous ways May 29-June 1 during the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration.

The 1991 event is called "From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates its 275th Anniversary."

The event, headquartered at The Natchez Eola Hotel, is co-sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the National Park Service's Natchez National Historical Park. Chairmen are Becky Junkin Nevill and Carolyn Vance Smith of Copiah-Lincoln and Stuart Johnson of the Park Service.

Natchez, the oldest settlement on the Mississippi River, was founded as a French trading post in 1716.

Later it was capital of the Mississippi Territory, birthplace of the state of Mississippi and home during the reign of King Cotton to more millionaires per capita than any other city in America.

Because of the area's historical richness, in 1990 the National Park Service named a portion of the city the Natchez National Historical Park.

The area's 275th anniversary will be marked during the literary celebration by a mix of serious presentations and lively entertainments.

The scholarly portion of the celebration features internationally known historians and writers, who will paint a broad picture as they lecture on Natchez's three centuries of literature, history and culture.

These lectures are open to the public free of charge, partially because of a \$17,718 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities through the Mississippi Humanities Council.

The lectures will be enhanced by the world premiere May 30 of a special drama called "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez." Johnson will be the subject of a lecture prior to the play.

This drama, by Dr. Evans Harrington of the University of Mississippi, is based on an extensive diary kept by Johnson, a wealthy free black of Natchez who died in 1851.

In connection with the play is a free ceremony May 30 dedicating the House of William Johnson to the National Park Service. This house was acquired in 1976 from Johnson's descendants by the Natchez Garden Club with grants administered by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

"The club partially restored the house with the hope that it would eventually become a museum dedicated to the life of Johnson and other aspects of African-American history," said Ellen Mosby, chairman of the dedication ceremony.

"The National Park Service is acquiring the property with the intention of making that dream come true," she said.

During the spring of 1991 the City of Natchez will acquire the William

Johnson House complex on State Street in downtown Natchez, using state-appropriated money. Both properties will then be donated to the National Park Service.

Also free during the celebration will be a 275th family-style birthday party June 1, with fireworks, food and entertainment on the Natchez Bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River.

Other free events are a pops concert by the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra and a historic flower show.

Options at low cost are the William Johnson drama, tours of several historic mansions and sites, a picnic at the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, cocktails and lunch at the Carriage House Restaurant on the grounds of historic Stanton Hall, a gala Henry Clay-inspired reception at the mansion D'Evereux and numerous relevant printed materials.

Lecturers include such internationally known literature and history experts as Dr. Michel Fabre of The Sorbonne in Paris; Dr. Alexander Ritter of the University of Hamburg, Germany; Dr. John Blassingame and Dr. Jay Gitlin, Yale University; Dr. Robert Remini, University of Illinois; Dr. Michael Wayne, University of Toronto; the author Nancy Scott Anderson of San Diego.

Also on the program are award-winning novelists Ellen Douglas and Alice Walworth Graham, both Natchez natives; Dr. David Sansing of the University of Mississippi; Dr. William K. Scarborough of the University of Southern Mississippi; Dr. Edwin Adams Davis of Louisiana State University; Patti Carr Black and James F. Barnett Jr. of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History; the poet Brooks Haxton of Sarah Lawrence College; the musician Richard Haxton of Los Angeles; the musician and writer Kenneth Haxton of Greenville, Miss.; and historians Ayres Haxton and Sim C. Callon of Natchez.

Lecture topics include:

- an overview of Natchez's 275-year history
- the early, powerful Natchez Indian tribe
- Natchez's French connection
- the aristocratic Natchez planters who owned thousands of slaves prior to the Civil War — and what happened in the aftermath of war
- free men of color before the Civil War, including Natchez's William Johnson
- Henry Clay's Natchez connection
- the Confederacy's First Lady, Varina Howell Davis of Natchez, who married Jefferson Davis in Natchez in 1845
- Natchez at the setting of fiction for three centuries
- Natchez as the setting for romance novels in the 19th and 20th centuries
- Richard Wright, world-renowned black writer born in Natchez
- Natchez as the inspiration for various creative members of Ellen

(See FESTIVAL, page 7)

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(FESTIVAL, continued from page 3)

Douglas' Haxton family.

Tickets for all events, including the free lectures, must be reserved in advance. The entire package of all special meals and other events is \$100 per person. Individual tickets range from \$10 to \$30 per event. Since seating is limited, tickets are on a first-come, first-served basis. Reservations or inquiries about the costs for individual events may be made by writing Natchez Literary Celebration, P.O. Box 894, Natchez, MS 39121.

Carolyn Vance Smith is coordinator of the English Department at Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez and founder and co-chairman of Co-Lin's Natchez Literary Celebration.

NATCHEZ FUN!

HELP CELEBRATE NATCHEZ' 275TH BIRTHDAY!

Let's celebrate! On Saturday, June 1, the oldest settlement on Old Man River turns 275 years old, and a whopper of a birthday party is being planned.

"This city-wide celebration includes an afternoon and evening of special events, including a history fair, an official birthday party complete with cake and ice cream, a fireworks display, and culminates with a street dance," birthday chairman Sandra Burkes says. Co-chairing the event are Beckie Johnson of MainStreet Natchez and Patricia Catchings of Historic Natchez Foundation.

The free festivities begin at 3 p.m. on the Natchez bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River. There'll be storytelling, children's songs and games from long ago, buggy rides, and portrayals of William Johnson, Sergeant Prentiss and Julia Nutt. A History Fair will show Indian Basket Masking, Buck Skinners, Flint Knappers, Civil War Reenactors, Blacksmithing, Furniture Making, Weaving, Pottery Making, Quilting and Butter Churning.

A Centennial celebration ceremony by the National Weather Service takes place at 6 p.m. The oldest weather reporting station in the country, Natchez was first to report weather nationally, with records dating back to 1799. Weather observers from all over Miss. will be recognized, and there will be music by the Holy Family Catholic Church Choir.

Birthday party time is 6:30 p.m., with music, party favors, ice cream and cake for everyone (free).

At dusk, a phenomenal fireworks display takes place over the river, sponsored by Natchez Coca Cola.

The grand finale, a Birthday Bash Street Dance, begins at 9 p.m. at the Canal Street Depot, and features The Bluz Boys, a 15-piece Rhythm and Blues Review from Jackson. Tickets to the dance are \$10 at the door and \$7.50 in advance (through MainStreet Natchez, P. O. Box 1462, Natchez, MS 39121).

See you Saturday, June 1! ■

By Barbara Potter

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COMMUNITY EVENT

2nd LITERARY CELEBRATION BURSTING WITH EVENTS

Wednesday, May 29, through Saturday, June 1, are jam-packed with a variety of events -- many free! -- offered by the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration and commemorating Natchez' 275th anniversary.

"We have a mix of serious presentations and lively entertainments," co-chairman Carolyn Vance Smith says. "Children as well as adults will enjoy the free concert by the Mississippi Symphony Pops Orchestra at 6 p.m., May 29, at Municipal Auditorium; the free performance by the Mississippi Medicine Show at 8:00 p.m. Under-the-Hill on May 29; the play, 'A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and his Natchez' (\$10 per ticket; \$7 for students), at Natchez High School Auditorium, 8:30 p.m. on May 30, and 3 p.m. on June 1; and the free 275th birthday party, with entertainment, food and fireworks, on the bluffs beginning at 3 p.m. on June 1."

"Also, our lectures at the Eola Hotel are free this year, thanks partly to a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities through the Mississippi Humanities Council. However, I must stress that **ADVANCE RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED**, due to limited seating capacity. The literary celebration is receiving nationwide publicity, with reservations pouring in from across the country. I hope interested townspeople will secure their reservations before it is too late to get into the lectures they want to hear."

Other entertainments include

- * a picnic lunch at The Grand Village of the Natchez on May 30, with native Indian music, crafts, activities, and selected foods (\$20 ticket needed);

- * a free ceremony at 210 State Street, dedicating the William Johnson house to the Natchez National Historical Park on May 30, at 5:30 p.m., followed at 6 p.m. by a free reception hosted by the Natchez Garden Club;

- * a free autograph party honoring all lecturers at 2 p.m., May 31, Eola Hotel;

- * free flower show and tea at D'Evereux, sponsored by the Pilgrimage Garden Club, from 2-4 p.m. on May 31;

- * a tour with refreshments (\$15 ticket needed) of Auburn, Elms Court and Jefferson College, from 2:30-5 p.m. on May 31;

- * a gala reception, "Come In, Please, Mr. Clay," at D'Evereux (\$20 ticket needed) from 5:30-7:30 p.m., May 31;

- * free tours of Melrose from 9-5 p.m., June 1;

- * and (\$30 ticket needed) tour of Stanton Hall and reception honoring the Haxton family at 12 noon with luncheon at 1 p.m. at the Carriage House on June 1.

This year's theme: "From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary," sets the tone for lecture topics including Natchez' French connection, free men of color before the Civil War, Henry Clay's Natchez connection, Varina Howell Davis, the Natchez Indians, Natchez as a fiction setting, and many other fascinating subjects exploring the literary, history and culture of Natchez from 1716-1991.

Lecturers include Dr. Michel Fabre of the Sorbonne in Paris; Dr. Alexander Ritter, University of Hamburg, Germany; Dr. John Blassingame and Dr. Jay Gitlin of Yale University; Dr. Robert Remini, University of Illinois; Dr. Michael Wayne, University of Toronto; author Nancy Scott Anderson of San Diego.

Also on the program are award-winning novelists Ellen Douglas and Alice Walworth Graham, both Natchez natives, poet Brooks Haxton of Sarah Lawrence College; musician Richard Haxton of Los Angeles; musician/writer Kenneth Haxton of Greenville; historians Ayres Haxton and Sim C. Callon of Natchez; Dr. David Sansing of University of Miss.; Dr. William Scarborough of University of Southern Miss.; Dr. Edwin Adams Davis of La. State University; Patti Carr Black and James F. Barnett, Jr. of the Miss. Dept. of Archives and History.

Co-sponsors of the celebration are Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the National Park Service's Natchez National Historical Park. Co-chairmen Smith of Co-Lin; Becky Junkin Nevill of Co-Lin; and Stuart Johnson, superintendent of the Natchez National Historical Park, have been working for the past year putting the literary celebration together. "We are extremely grateful for the assistance of scores of volunteer workers and the financial support from many generous businesses and organizations in the community," Smith says.

ALL TICKETS MUST BE RESERVED IN ADVANCE. For information, brochures, inquiries and reservations, call 442-7341 (or 1-800-647-6742), or write to Natchez Literary Celebration, P. O. Box 894, Natchez, MS 39121. Brochures with reservation forms can be picked up at Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Washington Campus, or at Natchez Pilgrimage Tours Headquarters, Canal Street Depot. ■

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WHY THE WILLIAM JOHNSON HOUSE IS SIGNIFICANT

(See related article on William Johnson in Natchez Digest's Feb. 1991 issue.)

A free ceremony dedicating the William Johnson House to the Natchez National Historical Park will be held at 210 State Street on Thursday, May 30, at 5:30 p.m. Included will be a brief address by Dr. Edwin Adams Davis, Professor of History Emeritus, Louisiana State University, and a musical presentation by the Holy Family Catholic Church Gospel Choir. Afterward, the Natchez Garden Club will host a free reception.

"Natchez is famous for its antebellum mansions built by rich cotton planters whose wealth was derived from an economy dependent upon slave labor," says Mimi Miller of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. "Nowhere was the slave-based agricultural economy more fully developed than in Mississippi. Eclipsed by the illusion of a romantic Old South of white architecture and flowers is the reality of black Mississippi."

Miller says that, through accident of birth or benevolent ownership, some African Americans were free men in the slave society. Almost one-half of Mississippi's entire free black population resided in Natchez in the decades preceding the Civil War.

One of these free blacks was William Johnson (1809-1851), a successful barber whose good business sense and high standards of conduct earned him recognition by both white and black population of Natchez.

"His published diary provides the most complete account of the life of a free black in the antebellum South," Miller says.

Johnson's social and economic position in antebellum Natchez is evident in his surviving, two-story, brick Greek Revival townhouse, located at 210 State Street. In his diary, Johnson writes of the construction of his 1841 residence and documents its dual function of barber shop and dwelling.

Johnson's descendants owned the house until 1976, when it was purchased by the Preservation Society of Elliott Hill, an affiliate of the Natchez Garden Club. "Recognizing the historical significance of the property, the organization bought the house to insure its preservation," Miller says. "They stabilized the house and completed the restoration of

the street facade. They also restored the rear two-story gallery of the house and rebuilt a collapsed wall of the detached brick outbuilding. Their hopes were that an organization with ties to the local African American community could acquire and develop the house as a museum property."

Miller says that the integrity of the upper two stories, which is the original residential portion of the William Johnson House, is outstanding. "No alterations were ever made to the original floor plan, no bathrooms were ever installed, and all original millwork remains. Evidence of nineteenth-century wallpapers and paint colors survives, and most doors retain original hardware. The two-story, brick kitchen building at the rear of the property, built between 1892 and 1897, includes all original doors and mantel pieces."

The Natchez National Historical Park's plans for the William Johnson House call for using the first story as a visitor reception and/or exhibit area, where the black history of Natchez would be interpreted.

"Exhibits would include the history of slavery in Natchez, the free black in the antebellum South, Natchez African Americans in Reconstruction politics, the Civil Rights Movement in Natchez, and the role of slaves and freed men in the creation of the city's grand architecture," Miller says. "Visitors would learn about Ibrahima, a slave who was born an African prince; Senator Hiram R. Revels, the first African American to take his seat in Congress; John R. Lynch, a slave at Dunleith who became the first African American to hold a public office in Mississippi and later a state legislator and congressman; and Richard Wright, a noted author born near Natchez."

The upper floors would interpret the life of William Johnson and would be restored to the year 1851, the year of his death and the date of an inventory of his household furnishings.

The first story of the outbuilding would either be for public facilities and/or a museum shop emphasizing African American culture. The second floor would be administrative offices or storage space.

In other words, the house would serve as a "museum reflecting the life of the writer of one of America's most important historical

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chronicals and serving as an interpretative center for Natchez African American history," Miller says. "This goal dates back to 1976, when the house was purchased by the Preservation Society of Ellicott Hill. The museum will pay tribute to one of America's most unique diarists and highlight the African American heritage of one of the South's most significant historic cities."

An original drama entitled, "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez," and lectures discussing African Americans will take place during the Natchez Literary Celebration May 29-June 1. Lectures are free but require advance reservations. Tickets to the play cost \$10 for adults and \$7 for students. NLC brochures with reservation forms for lectures and the play can be picked up at Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Washington campus, or at Natchez Pilgrimage Tours Headquarters on State Street, or write Natchez Literary Celebration, P. O. Box 894, Natchez, 39121. ■

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William Johnson, a free black of Natchez who died in 1851, is subject of lecture & play May 30. His house will be dedicated to the National Park Service.

Calendar

Continued from Page 12

available from 2:30 to 5 p.m. Included on the tour are The Briars, Elms Court and Jefferson College, where site director Jan Barrett will present an informal lecture, "The True Story of the Aaron Burr Oath."

The May 31 activities conclude with a gala reception at D'Ivernon. Tickets are \$20.

Also, in connection with the celebration, the city of Natchez will celebrate its 275th birthday on June 1, including fireworks on the bluff overlooking the river. Festivities begin at 5:30 p.m.

■ Many other historic sites and scenes draw tourists during May — Historic Jefferson College, Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, the historic Natchez City Cemetery, Natchez Under the Hill, to name a few — and all at no charge.

A special event at Jefferson College, located in the small Washington community a few miles north of Natchez, is a photographic exhibit of portraits of black people who lived in Natchez in the late 19th century. The stunning portraits reveal a beautiful, aristocratic population.

■ In addition, many tourists may visit lovely antebellum Melrose, the Natchez National Historical Park, which is open daily and the year around. The grounds are open at no charge. House tours, offered every half hour between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., are \$4 for adults and \$2 for children and senior citizens.

■ In May, single-house tour tickets and group tour arrangements are available at Natchez Pilgrimage Tours. Other houses operate independently, such as Weymouth Hall, which overlooks the Mississippi River and is located on the north side of town, and Ravenwood, a late 19th-century house of extravagant style at the end of South Union Street.

12-NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT, Natchez, Miss.

Tourists guide to historic Natchez

Natchez: A place to visit the year around

Welcome to Natchez on the Mississippi River! May is an exciting month to visit the historic city on the river — especially this year as the first annual Natchez Opera Festival gets under way and continues throughout the month.

And many of the antebellum houses that drew thousands of tourists to Natchez throughout the year continue to open their doors to visitors. In May, the gardens are lovely, with roses at their spring peak and colorful annuals and perennials beginning to bloom.

This calendar of events tells you about towns, restaurants, festivals, shows to see and more. As Natchez's beautiful seasons blend one into the other, events to visit every issue fill the calendar.

In the hot summertime, when locals head for beaches, a lakeside retreat or air-conditioned rooms, tourists from cold climates come to relish the warm, humid days.

In the fall, winter and spring, visitors frequently are amazed at the beauty and color this small Mississippi city has to offer. Here today? Come tomorrow, too — we'll meet you at next season.

■ **MAY** is music-lovers month in Natchez, with a month-long festival

devoted to music from famous operas. The Natchez Opera Festival will feature on May 4 a gala operatic recital by soprano Phyllis Demostropoulos at 8 p.m. at St. Mary's Catholic Church, tickets \$40 and \$15. The \$40 ticket includes a black-tie reception at antebellum Glenhurst.

"Man of La Mancha" will be presented at 8 p.m. on May 18 at the City Auditorium, starring George Hogan, Donna Appledorn and Natchez's own River Hedderei. Tickets are \$25, \$15, \$9.50 and \$5.

On May 31, the festival concludes with "La Traviata," starring Victoria Polgna, Richard Fracker and Robert McFarland, presented at 8:30 p.m. at the City Auditorium. Tickets are \$25, \$15, \$9.50 and \$5.

Also throughout the month are revivals and plantation concerns, including "Mooan 200th Birthday Celebration" at 8 p.m. on May 10 at The Natchez Eola Hotel, tickets \$6; "Best of Broadway" at 7 p.m. on May 11 at antebellum Roselle, tickets \$10; "Opera Spectacular" at 3:30 p.m. on May 12 at The Eola, tickets \$10;

an operatic recital by Perry Branson, tenor, and Janet Tyner, lyric soprano, at 2 p.m. on May 19 at Holy Family Catholic Church, tickets \$3; a reprint of "Opera Spectacular" at 7 p.m. on May 30 at Roselle, tickets \$10;

a reprint of "Best of Broadway" at 3 p.m.

on May 30 at Stanton Hall, tickets \$10; "Songs of the River" at 7 p.m. on May 26 at The Eola, tickets \$10; and a reprint of "Songs of the River" at 7 p.m. on May 28 at The Eola, tickets \$10. Natchez Pilgrimage Tours has tickets and more information.

■ If you like baseball, a treat is in store from May 3 to May 5, when the Southwestern Athletic Conference baseball tournament takes place at Liberty Park, located at Liberty Road and John R. Junkin Drive. Check *The Natchez Democrat* for details about times and teams.

■ Another exciting sporting event takes place on May 31 and June 1 when the third annual Adams County Sheriff's Rodeo takes place at Liberty Park. There will be steer wrestling, bull riding, barrel riding, saddle broncs, calf roping, team roping, barrel racing and more, beginning each day at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$3 for children and \$5 for adults.

■ For lovers of literature, the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration is scheduled for May 29 through June 1. The series of free lectures focus on the theme, "From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates its 275th Anniversary."

In conjunction with the free lectures, the

celebration will include special tours, concerts, plays and other events to commemorate the cultural diversity represented between 1795 and 1991. Headquarters will be The Natchez Eola Hotel. Call 642-7341 for more information.

Lectures begin at 4 p.m. on May 29 at The Eola. At 6 p.m., the Mississippi Symphony Pops Orchestra will perform in a free concert at the City Auditorium. And at 7:30 p.m., festivities continue at Natchez Under the Hill with a Dutch-breed supper and a free performance of the Mississippi Medicine Show at 8 p.m.

Lectures continue on May 30, beginning at 9 a.m. at The Eola. A picnic lunch will be held at noon at Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, whose native Indian music, crafts and food will be featured. Tickets are \$20. At 8:30 p.m. the premiere of "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez" will be presented at the Natchez High School Auditorium on Seagriff S. Prunias Drive. Tickets are \$10.

More free lectures on May 31 get under way at 9 a.m. at The Eola. A free flower show and tea will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. at antebellum D'Ivernon.

A three-day tour at \$15 per ticket is **See CALENDAR, Page 13**

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Tourists guide to . . .

Historic Natchez

May 1991

A monthly reader service of *The Natchez Democrat*

Natchez, Miss.

14 TODAY in Mississippi/May 1991

MAY EVENTS



TODAY in Mississippi/May 1991 15

River Art Association Juried Show,
Singing River Mall, 762-3391

■ NATCHEZ: May 30-June 1, Library
Celebration of the area's heritage. The
Natchez Eola Hotel, 442-9111

YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUESTED AT LONGWOOD
THURSDAY, APRIL 25TH, 5:15 P.M. TO
PARTICIPATE IN A PICTURE-TAKING EVENT TO
PUBLICIZE THE CITY'S 275TH BIRTHDAY
JUNE 1, 1991

Come, bring your family, friends, neighbors
and co-workers -- people of all ages -- and
be a part of history-in-the-making!

For more information, contact 445-4611 or
drop by the Chamber of Commerce.

*Rain date: Monday, April 29, 5:15 p.m.

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MAY 1991



Volume XXXIII

Number 5

Natchez Celebrates 275th Anniversary May 29-June 1

Robert Remini of the University of Illinois, John Blassingame of Yale University, and William Scarborough of the University of Southern Mississippi are just a few of the scholars who will participate in the Natchez Literary Celebration this year, along with writer Ellen Douglas (Josephine Haxton) who will discuss the city's influence on her art. Other artistic members of the Haxton family will do the same. Premiering will be "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez," a drama by Evans Harrington of the University of Mississippi, based on Johnson's diary of 1835-51. In addition to the full schedule of lectures (all free), there will be receptions, a tour of Melrose, the dedication of the William Johnson House, a pops concert, and more. For information about making reservations for parties, tours, and performances, call 1-800-647-6742 or (601)-442-7341. The free lecture program is financially assisted by the National Endowment for the Humanities through the Mississippi Humanities Council. The documentary drama is supported in part by a grant from the Mississippi Arts Commis-

Historic Preservation Week May 12-18

William Johnson House Update

When Congress amended the authorization bill for the Natchez National Historical Park to include the William Johnson House, it specified that the house and adjoining building be donated to the National Park Service. Since that time, the Department of Archives and History, through its Historic Properties Trust Fund, has contributed \$10,000 towards that end; and the City of Natchez has secured permission from the Department of Finance and Administration of the State of Mississippi to use a portion of the \$1 million legislative appropriation to the Park project to provide the remaining needed funds to finalize the purchase. Mayor David Armstrong of Natchez has received the Department's Historic Properties Trust Fund grant to be applied to the

purchase of the William Johnson House from the Preservation Society of Ellicott Hill. The City of Natchez will convey title to the two buildings to the National Park Service during the Natchez Literary Celebration at the end of this month. Elbert R. Hilliard, Archives director, stated, "On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the staff of the Department, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the Historic Properties Trust Fund to preserve the William Johnson House, which represents a vital part of the story of Natchez, especially its African-American culture. The Preservation Society of Ellicott Hill is to be commended for its role of leadership in acquiring and preserving this significant Mississippi Landmark."

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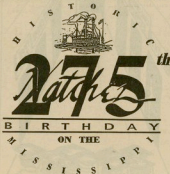
Outpost to treasure: Natchez celebrates anniversary

The second Natchez Literary Celebration, to take place May 29-June 1, is entitled "From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary."

The 1991 line-up of activities features the dedication of the William Johnson House to the Natchez National Historical Park and a host of lectures, tours, and celebrations that will culminate in a 275th Birthday Party on the Natchez Bluffs.

Co-sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the National Park Service, the 1991 Natchez Literary Celebration received a \$17,718 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities through the Mississippi Humanities Council, making it possible to provide this year's lectures free of charge.

Director of Proceedings again this year is former Mississippi Governor William F. Winter,



president of the Board of Trustees of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

Two Co-Lin Natchez instructors, Carolyn Vance Smith and Becky Junkin Nevill, are serving as NLC co-chairmen, along with Stuart Johnson, superintendent of the year-old Natchez National Historic Park.

Smith said lectures will be given by internationally known experts, covering 275 years of the history, literature and culture of the Natchez area.

"In addition to the free events, there will be a number of activities which carry ticket prices ranging from \$7 to \$20," Smith said.

These activities include a picnic at Grand Village, tours of historic Natchez homes, an evening party at D'Everman and performances of the play, "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez."

Though these tickets are \$1

available individually, there is also a reduced-price total package available for \$100, which includes a packet of printed materials containing a name tag, reading list, program booklet, and other items, Smith said.

Even free events require a ticket, and Smith urges interested students to make reservations well in advance.

"The grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities offers a wonderful opportunity for Co-Lin Natchez students to attend these lectures at no cost, and we encourage students to take advantage of it," Smith said.

Registration, headquarters, and the location of the daily lectures is the Natchez Eska Hotel.

For information, call 1-800-647-6742 or (601) 442-7341, or write NLC, P.O. Box 994, Natchez, MS 39021.

(See related stories, pages 2, 4,

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Huge 275th birthday party on the bluff to end NLC

by Rick Hartzog

Food, fun, fireworks and entertainment!

Climaxing the 1991 Natchez Literary Celebration is a huge 275th birthday extravaganza Saturday, June 1, on the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River.

Local business person Sandra Burkes, coordinator of the occasion, described plans for the final event of the NLC as "more than just a birthday party. It's going to be a real celebration for the entire family.

"This year is the 275th anniversary of the establishment of Fort Rosalie, but it's also the 200th year since the incorporation of Natchez as a town. 1991 is also the 100th anniversary of the National Weather Service, and since Natchez is the oldest weather reporting station in the United States, the National Weather Service wants to

celebrate with us," Burkes said.

According to Burkes, Willard Scott of the NBC Today Show and Woody Assaf of WLBT in Jackson have been invited to join in the festivities, as well as NASA Director Richard Truly of Fayette.

"We're going to start at 3 p.m. with a hands-on history fair," Burkes said. "We've lined up local crafts people to demonstrate butter-churning, shuck-doll-making, square-dancing and blacksmithing. We even have Choctaw basket-makers coming."

In addition, Burkes said there will be ongoing performances by community musicians, storytellers and first-person dramas of personages from history.

"The whole thing will have a carnival-like atmosphere," Burkes said. "Broadway will be barricaded at the bluff, so it will be like a street party.

"Then, at 6:30 everyone will adjourn to the gazebo. We want to honor our military with a color-guard and by singing 'The Star-Spangled Banner,' and then introduce our VIPs.

"We have also asked local civic organizations, churches, businesses and other groups to make promissory donations of things like keeping a street or block clean for the upcoming year," Burkes said. "We're going to bury a time capsule, too."

The huge birthday cake for the event is being prepared by Kathy Madden, Food Service instructor at Co-Lin Natchez.

After cake and ice cream, Burkes said there will be a gigantic fireworks display over the Mississippi River, provided by the Coca-Cola Bottling Company.

"That will conclude the NLC with a bang," Burkes said.

A street dance at the Depot,

with music by the Blur Boys, will then go from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Tickets for the street dance are \$7.50 in advance and \$10 at the

door, and local vendors will be selling food, but the rest of the birthday party is absolutely free, Burkes said.

Diary is source of play

The diary of William Johnson is the source and inspiration of a new play, "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His

Natchez," which will premiere at 8:30 p.m., May 30.

The play was written especially for the 1991 Natchez Literary Celebration by Dr. Evans Harrington, University of Mississippi.

Harrington was commissioned to write the play through a \$2,500 grant from the Mississippi Arts Commission to Copiah-Lincoln Community College.

Casting for the play has all been done locally. It is being directed by Richard Alwood of Ferriday, La.

A repeat performance is scheduled for 3 p.m., June 1. Both performances will take place at the Natchez High School Auditorium. Cost is \$10 per person; \$7 for students of any age.



WILLIAM JOHNSON

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LITERARY CELEBRATION

Johnson House to be dedicated

by Rick Hartzog

The William Johnson House on State Street will become part of the Natchez National Historical Park in a free ceremony conducted by the Natchez Literary Celebration at 5:30 p.m., May 30.

For the people of Natchez, this dedication is a highly significant event, said Stuart Johnson, park superintendent. "The life of William Johnson is a central element of the 1991 NLC," he said.

Johnson was born a slave in Natchez in 1809. In 1820 he was freed by his white owner, who is believed to have been his father. Once free, Johnson quickly made his way to the top of Natchez's free black society by demonstrating his considerable business ability and high standards of conduct.

Beginning as a barber, by 1840 Johnson had expanded his interests to other areas of business and had acquired a substantial amount of land in and around Natchez. A slave owner himself, Johnson contracted services for many of the businesses in pre-Civil War Natchez.

By the time of his death in 1851, Johnson was highly regarded by both the white and black segments of Natchez society.

Murdered by a white man in a dispute over land, there was a public outrage when the legal restrictions of race prevented the conviction of his murderer.

Under Mississippi law, a black man, slave or free, could not

testify in court against a white man, and the only witnesses to the crime were black. The defense rested solely on proving the

Professor of History Emeritus from Louisiana State University, who discovered the Johnson diary and had it published, is one of the



WILLIAM JOHNSON HOUSE: This 1841 townhouse was built by William Johnson of Natchez. It will become part of the Natchez National Historical Park May 30.

murderer to be white.

A self-educated man, Johnson kept a diary of his life from 1835 to 1851. Nearly 100 years after his death, this diary was discovered and published in 1951.

Johnson's diary is recognized as being the most complete account of the life of a free black man in the antebellum South.

Dr. Edwin Adams Davis,

guest lecturer of the Natchez Literary Celebration.

The city of Natchez has purchased the house and adjacent building. During the dedication ceremony, Deputy Director of the National Park Service Herb Cables will receive the property for the Natchez National Historical Park from the city of Natchez.



N-SIGHTS

Feeling ignorant? Read this NLC info

by Rick Hartzog

Feeling ignorant with all the experts on Natchez's history coming to town?

There's no need. Read on.

*Henry Clay was never President of the United States, nor was he ever world heavyweight boxing champion.

A leading American statesman for nearly 40 years, Clay repeatedly used his influence to hold the Union together through compromises between the North and South, becoming known as the "Great Pacificator."

Clay ran for President three times, losing to John Quincy Adams (1824), Andrew Jackson (1832) and James K. Polk (1844).

*William Johnson was a free black businessman of Natchez, whose diary of daily life in Natchez for the years 1835-51 was published in 1951 by Dr. Edwin Adams Davis and Dr. William R. Hogan of Louisiana State University. Davis's book, *The Barber of Natchez*, is well-known by Natchez historians.

*Varina Howell was the beautiful young daughter of a wealthy Natchez landholder. Her storybook life includes being wooed by Jefferson Davis, whom she married at The Briers in Natchez in February 1845.

*Natchez is the oldest settlement along the Mississippi River. Jean Baptiste le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville, a French governor of Louisiana, built Fort

Rosalie on the site in 1716. 1991 marks Natchez's 275th year.

*The Haxtons are a Natchez family with many achievements in music and literature.

Kenneth Haxton, the father, has written over 130 pieces of music, eight novels, a collection of short stories, a screen play and a play. He also constructs crossword puzzles for the New York Times. A custom-designed Natchez is included in the packet of printed materials distributed for the NLC.

Ellen Douglas is the pen name of Josephine Ayres Haxton, the mother. Author of six novels, a book of short stories and a book of fairy tales retold, Douglas has won numerous awards for her work.

Ayres, Brooks and Richard Haxton are the sons of Kenneth and Josephine.

Ayres lives on and manages the Ayres family farm near Natchez. He also serves in the Mississippi House of Representatives.

Brooks is an accomplished poet who has had four books of his poetry published, in addition to numerous entries in literary journals.

Richard Haxton is an actor, writer and musician who lives in Los Angeles. In addition to touring with numerous musical acts, he has recorded on A&M Records and performed and written portions of two plays.

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from Carolyn Vance Smith

FOR RELEASE Fri., Sat., Sun., MAY 24, 25, 26, in TRACINGS

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Reservations for seats at 12 free lectures during the Natchez Literary Celebration May 29-June 1 may be made by calling 442-7341, 446-6631 or 442-9111. Theme of the conference is "Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary." Speakers are internationally known writers and historians.

Tickets for low-cost events related to a series of free lectures during the Natchez Literary Celebration May 29-June 1 are available by calling 442-7341, 446-6631 or 442-9111. Events include a picnic at Grand Village May 30, a play called "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez" May 30 and June 1, a three-house tour May 31, a gala party at D'Evereux May 31 and a tour, reception and luncheon at Stanton Hall June 1.

A free concert called "275 Years of Natchez's Favorite Music" will be performed at 6 p.m. May 29 at the Natchez City Auditorium by the Mississippi Symphony Pops Orchestra. The concert will kick off Natchez's 275th anniversary celebration. Selections will be popular, nostalgic and patriotic music beloved for three centuries.

Tickets for "A Free Man of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez," a new play by Dr. Evans Harrington of the University of Mississippi, are available by calling 442-7341, 446-6631 or 442-9111. The two-act drama costs \$10 for general admission and \$7 for students of any age. It will be presented at Natchez High School auditorium at 8:30 p.m. May 30 and at 3 p.m. June 1.

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Major David Armstrong
P.O. Box 1100
Waco, TX 76798

It was such a pleasure for Dr. James and all of us at CGL to have you with us on October 15 for the Press Conference. Thank you for coming and supporting CGL.

We look forward to continued success with the National Literary Celebration, and we thank you again for all you did to make the 1999 Celebration such a joy.

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26

Figure 1

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Downloaded by [Your Institution] on [Date] at [Time]. See [Page] for details.

3. At 10:30 a.m., interview with Alice Walker, Graham, novelist. She has written 8 novels published by New York publishers. Four of which are set in Natchez and are classified as romance novels. She will talk at the celebration June 1 at 8 a.m. about her fiction and will read from Indigo Beard and Natchez Memor. The interview will be at her home, 700 N. Union St.
4. At 11:30 a.m., interview with Carolyn Wynn Smith, co-chairman of the Natchez Literary Celebration and founder of the event in 1994. She is coordinator of the English Department at Capital-Lincoln Community College, which is co-sponsor of the celebration with the Natchez National Historical Park. She will give an overview of the history of Natchez and the 225-year anniversary of the town, which is the theme of the 1994 celebration. The interview will be at the gazebo on the Natchez Bluffs, overlooking the river. Slides of Natchez scenes during the past centuries are available from Sam Collier to accompany the taping. Also available are photographs of the lectures during the 1994 celebration.
5. At 1:30 p.m., interview with Dr. Alexander Hutter, professor of literature at the University of Marburg, Germany. His talk during the celebration will be at 10:30 a.m., Thursday, May 20. His subject is "Natchez as the Setting for Fiction for Three Centuries: Variations of a Literary Regionalism." The three authors representing the 18th century, the 19th century, and the 20th century will be, in order, Hans Christensen, Charles Haselfield, and Barbara Wooty. The interview will be at 8:00 a.m. on 8:00 a.m. on 8:00 a.m. at a Jewish party May 15 from 5:30-7:30 p.m., which will recreate an 1842 reception held there honoring Henry Clay.
6. At 2:30 p.m., interview with Stuart Johnson, superintendent of the Natchez National Historical Park. He is in charge of the dedication ceremony at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, May 20, at the House of William Johnson at the National Park Service as the second segment of the Natchez National Historical Park. He will discuss William Johnson (1809-1851), a free man of color of Natchez, and why his house will become part of the National Park. He will also discuss the play to be presented at 1:30 p.m., May 20 called "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez." This play was especially written for the celebration by Dr. Bruce Harrington of the University of Mississippi. The interview will be at Mr. Johnson's home, 130 Union St.
7. At 3:30 p.m., interview with Ayres Haxton of Natchez, representative from Adams County to the Mississippi Legislature. He will appear on the program at 1 p.m., Saturday, June 1, at Horton Hall and the adjacent Carrington House restaurant, along with his mother, Joannine Ayres Haxton (poet, writer, Ellen Douglas's first father, Kenneth Koch's (poet, author, NY Times crossword puzzle writer) his brother, Brandon Haxton, poet in residence at Sarah Lawrence College; and his brother Richard Haxton, musician and actor in Los Angeles. The Haxtons will talk about the influence of Natchez on their creativity at the June 1 ceremony. They will read from their poetry and fiction and they will have professional musicians play their original works set in Natchez. Ayres will give an overview of the Haxton family's connection to Natchez for 200 years and how it has influenced them. The interview will be at Horton Hall.

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MEMORANDUM

Carolyn Admett



TO: *TO* All Faculty and Staff
FROM: *TO* Travis Thornton, Dean of the Natchez Campus
DATE: May 16, 1991
SUBJECT: Natchez Literary Celebration

The Place to Be.

It's almost here - the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration! It is with great pride that Copiah-Lincoln and the Natchez National Historical Park are co-sponsoring such an outstanding, prize-winning event on the theme of the 275th anniversary of Natchez at The Natchez Eola Hotel. To reserve a seat for yourself and your family, just call Co-Lin's Admissions Office and tell us how many seats you want. If you want to buy all or part of the related meals, parties, play, or tour, we can help with that, too.

Delayed { To kick off the conference will be a very special free event, a pops concert by the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra. It will be at 6 p.m., Wednesday, May 29, at the Natchez City Auditorium on Jefferson Street. Music will be familiar, nostalgic, patriotic numbers that we all love. It will last about 1 1/2 hours; dress is casual. I would like to invite you and your families to be present at this concert so you can be publicly recognized as part of the Co-Lin organization. This will be the only time that all of us will be together to be introduced at the Literary Celebration, and I'd like to have a good turnout. You'll be seated in a section marked "Copiah-Lincoln," and at the beginning of the program, Gov. William Winter (the master of ceremonies for the Celebration) will introduce us and ask us to rise. If you will, please call my office between now and May 25 and tell us how many seats to save for you and your family. We hope to see you there.

And, by means of this letter, I would like to thank you in advance for your able and cheerful assistance with the millions of details that such a complicated event as the Literary Celebration requires. I have seen so many of you willingly and capably take on complex jobs and do them superbly during the past several months.

It takes all of us to make up the winning Co-Lin team. I am very proud of you and very proud to be a part of this extraordinary undertaking. I look forward to participating in it very much. I hope to see you at the concert and at as many of the other events as you can attend. It sounds like it will all be great.

TT/rr

From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 1991

- 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.**
Registration, Ellis House Lobby
- 4:00 p.m.**
Welcome and Special Introductions
Dr. Billy B. Thomas, President
Capeh-Lewis Community College
- 4:15 p.m.**
Lecture
A
"Natchez on the Mississippi: An Illustrated History"
Dr. David Gervais, Professor of History
The University of Mississippi, Oxford, and
Mr. Sam C. Carter, Photographer, Author, Historian, Natchez
- 6:00 p.m.**
"175 Years of Natchez's Favorite Music"
Free Concert by the Mississippi Symphony Pops Orchestra
Natchez Municipal Auditorium
- 7:30 p.m.**
"Where I Am Begun: Natchez Under the Hill"
Dutch Hospitality and Fun, with a Free Performance at
8:00 p.m. of the Mississippi Medicine Show

THURSDAY, MAY 30, 1991

- 9:00 a.m.**
Lecture
B
"Overseas on the Chertsey Coast: Natchez and the
Crested Wren of the Mississippi Valley"
Dr. Jay Griffin, Professor of Biology
Rutgers University, New Haven, Connecticut
- 10:00 a.m.**
Coffee
- 10:30 a.m.**
Lecture
C
"Natchez as the Setting or Fusion for Three Centuries:
Reflections of a Literary Historian"
Dr. Alexander Miller, Professor of Literature
University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany
- 11:30 a.m.**
Lecture
D
"Introduction to the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians"
Mr. James F. Bennett, Jr.
Director, Division of Historic Properties
Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Natchez
- 12 Noon**
Pepsi Luncheon, The Grand Village of the Natchez Indians
Jefferson Davis Boulevard, with Native Indian Music, Crafts,
Activities, and Selected Foods (Ticket Needed)
- 2:00 p.m.**
Lecture
E
"Lords or Captives? Some Reflections on the Natchez
Nepotism"
Dr. William Scarborough, Professor of History
The University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg
- 3:00 p.m.**
Coffee
- 3:30 p.m.**
Lecture
F
"The Men of Color in the South Before 1867"
Dr. John W. Blassingame, Director, Afro-American Studies
Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut
- 5:00 p.m.**
Free Ceremony Dedicating the House of William Johnson
1891-1991, a Free Block of Antiques, to the Natchez National
Historical Park, 210 East Street

"Reminiscences of My Research on William Johnson"
Dr. Edwin Adams Clark, Professor of History, Emory
University, Atlanta, Georgia

Musical Presentation by the Holy Family Catholic Church
Gospel Choir

- 6:00 p.m.**
Free Reception near the William Johnson House, Hosted by
the Natchez Garden Club
- 6:30 p.m.**
Presenters of "A Garden of Color: William Johnson and
His Natchez"
A Major Speaker: William Johnson's Diary, 1800-1861,
By Dr. James Harrington, Professor of English Literature,
The University of Mississippi, Oxford
Natchez High School Auditorium (Ticket Needed)

FRIDAY, MAY 31, 1991

- 9:00 a.m.**
Lecture
G
"Natchez to New York: Natchez Howard Clark at Home"
Mr. Nancy South Anderson, Author and Historian
San Diego, California
- 10:00 a.m.**
Coffee
- 10:30 a.m.**
Lecture
H
"Henry Clay and the Natchez Connection"
Dr. Robert Rattner, Professor of History and
Professor of Humanities
University of Illinois, Chicago
- 1:00 p.m.**
Lecture
I
"The Reshaping of Plantation Society"
Dr. Michael Haynes, Professor of History
University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
- 2:00-3:00 p.m.**
Free Autograph Party Following All Lectures, Ellis House
- 2:00-4:00 p.m.**
Celebrating Natchez's 275th Anniversary through
History and Heritages
A Free Flower Show and Tea at the Historic Madison
O'Leary House, Sponsored by the Pilgrimage Garden Club
- 2:30-5:00 p.m.**
Tour with Refreshments at Auburn (Ticket Needed)
A Auburn, City-Owned 1812 Mansion Famous for its
architectural headquarters of the Auburn Garden Club
A Gino Coast, Home of Mrs. Douglas H. Mackall, a
descendant of Natchez Planter Family named Tourist
A Jefferson College, Near the Site of the
Natchez Bluff Amusement, with Remarks
"The True Story of the Auburn Burn Down"
By Mr. James F. Bennett, Jr.
- 5:30-7:30 p.m.**
"Come In, Please, Mr. Clay" a Safe Reception with Food,
Beverages, and Music at the Historic Madison O'Leary House.
Marked after an 1891 Reception held there
Honoring Henry Clay (Ticket Needed)

SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 1991

- 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**
Free Tours of the Madison O'Leary House, Courtyard, Natchez
National Historical Park
- 9:00 a.m.**
Lecture
J
"Romance in Natchez: The Setting for Captain Southern
Rover"
Mr. Paul Carr Black, Director, State Historical Museum
Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson
and Mrs. Alice Wadsworth Graham, Novelist, Natchez
- 10:00 a.m.**
Coffee
- 10:30 a.m.**
Lecture
K
"Richard Wright and Natchez: An Enduring Connection"
Dr. Michael Hayes, Professor of English
The Sorbonne, Paris, France
- 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.**
Tours of Historic Stanton Hall, with Reception Honoring the
Natchez Family of Natchez, Stanton Hall Courtyard
(Ticket Needed)
- 1:00 p.m.**
Luncheon, The Carriage House Restaurant at Stanton Hall
(Ticket Needed)
After Luncheon: Discussion, Readings, and Musical Presenta-
tions by Members of the Natchez Family and Selected
Mississippi Musicians
- Lecture
L**
"Natchez: Treasures in a Family Wreath"
Mr. Ayres Hester
Representative to the Mississippi Legislature, Natchez
- "A National World Landscape and Character"
Mr. Ayres Hester
Representative to the Mississippi Legislature, Natchez
- "Natchez Plans"
Mr. Gino Coast, Visiting Post
David Lawrence College, Birmingham, New York
- "Natchez: An Inspiration"
Mr. Richard Ingram, Author, Writer, and Musician
Los Angeles, California
- "Natchez: Its Influence on My Music"
Mr. Kenneth Hester
Musical Composer, Greenville, Mississippi
- 3:00 p.m.**
Repeat Performance of "A Garden of Color:
William Johnson and His Natchez" (Ticket Needed)
- 5:00 p.m.**
"Let's Celebrate - Natchez Style"
Entertainment: Food, Flowers, and Fun for the Family
A Free 275th Birthday Party on the Natchez Bluff
Celebrating the Mississippi River

RESERVATION FORM

Since space is limited for all lectures and related
events, reservations will be honored on a first-come,
first-served basis. Walk-ins will be welcomed only if
space is available.

Name(s) and Title(s) _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Admission is free to the following: all lectures, the
pops concert, the William Johnson House dedication
ceremony and reception, the autograph party, the
flower show, the tour of Melrose, and the birthday
party.

Reservations are not necessary for any of the above
except the lectures. To reserve a hot seat in the lecture
hall, please insert the number of seats wanted in the
following list:

Lecture A _____	Lecture G _____
Lecture B _____	Lecture H _____
Lecture C _____	Lecture I _____
Lecture D _____	Lecture J _____
Lecture E _____	Lecture K _____
Lecture F _____	Lecture L _____

(Please note both sides of this form.)

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TRINITY TALES

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH



305 S. COMMERCE NATCHEZ, MS 39120 601 - 445-8432
Mail: P. O. Box 1323 Natchez, MS 39121-1323

The Rt. Rev. Duncan M. Gray, Jr., Bishop
The Rev. Lmuel G. Parks, Jr., Rector
The Rev. Ray Worthington, Headmaster of Trinity School

William C. McGehee, Jr., Senior Warden
Bernard P. Wood, Junior Warden
Bruce M. Kuehnle, Jr., Clerk

Newsletter for the Week of
May 26 - June 1, 1991

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: TRINITY SUNDAY

7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist I
10:00 a.m. Bishop's Visitation
Confirmation/Holy Eucharist II
11:00 a.m. Reception
12:30 p.m. Parish Picnic
5:30 p.m. Evening Prayer

Chalice Bearer - Brent Taunton

Presenter of Confirmands - William McGehee

Acolytes - Peirce Beach, James Browning,
John Browning, Patrick Mulhearn, Andy
Ferrington, William Stephens, William
Ernst, Wheeler Morrison, Troyce McDaniel

Altar Guild - Laura Parks, Shirley Rose
Barnett, Elaine Easley, Ruth Keyer,
Betty Rogillio, Roilynn Brooks

Flower Guild - Ruth Ellen Clahoun and
Ethel Ranta

Ushers - Juanice Druetta, Charles Sullivan,
Frank Swalm, and John Swalm

Proper - 13 Cantic
1st Reading - Exodus 3:1-6
2nd Reading - Romans 8:12-17
Gospel - John 3:1-16

Flowers on the Altar Sunday are given to
the Glory of God and in thanksgiving for
and in celebration of the 20th birthday
of Stephanie Ann Springer by Millie and
Loff Calvert.

A special note of gratitude to Disa
Taunton and her staff for the selfless
giving of their time and energy in this
most important service to God and the
Church: organizing and promoting the
education of our children.

THE BISHOP'S ANNUAL VISITATION!

TRINITY SUNDAY, our "Name Day" is always a
big day in the life of our parish, and this
year should be no exception. Bishop Gray will
be here to preside at Confirmation and the Holy
Eucharist at 10:00 a.m.

Following the service there will be an informal
reception in Kuehnle Hall hosted by the Women
of the Church honoring Bishop Gray and the new
confirmands.

At 12:30 p.m. the Parish Picnic will begin at
Elmscourt by the gracious invitation of Grace
MacNeil. This annual occasion is always great
fun for all adults and children. Bring your
swim suits if you'd like to swim. The church
will furnish cold drinks and ice cream for this
"covered dish" picnic. Also bring pallets or
lawn chairs for your comfort. There is plenty
of shade or sun to your liking. In the event
of rain, the picnic will be held in Kuehnle
Hall. Bring a friend if you like.

Bishop Gray will also conduct the 7:30 service
Sunday Morning.

The 5:30 p.m. service will be Evening Prayer
led by Buddy Kayne.

THIS SUNDAY BEGINS OUR SUMMER SCHEDULE!

Take special note of the changes in time for
our services.

10:00 a.m. will be our
Regular Family Service

7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.
services are the same

This past Sunday was the final day for Sunday
School until next fall.

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From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure:

Famous Natchez residents and visitors then and now -- including Ellen Douglas (pen name of Josephine Ayres Haxton), Alice Walworth Graham, Eudora Welty, Richard Wright, William Johnson, Henry Clay, Varina Howell Davis and many others -- will be subjects of free lectures by internationally known experts May 29 through June 1 at the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration.

The cultural event is called "From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary."



FORMER MISSISSIPPI Gov. William Winter will serve as Director of Proceedings for NLC.

sary "Headquarters is The Natchez Eola Hotel, where all lectures will take place.

Reservations are required for all activities and must be made in writing, since seating is limited. Reservation forms may be obtained by calling 1-800-647-6742 or (601) 442-7341 or by writing Natchez Literary Celebration, P.O. Box 894, Natchez, MS 39121.

All lectures are free of charge, partially because of a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities through the Mississippi Humanities Council.

Other activities are free or low-cost,

according to the event's co-sponsors, Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the National Park Service's Natchez National Historical Park.

In addition to 13 free lectures will be the following related events:

*A free pops concert by the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra May 29.

*A free ceremony dedicating the William Johnson House to the National Park Service May 30, including music by the Holy Family Catholic Church Gospel Choir and refreshments.

*A free autograph party May 31.

*A free flower show and tea May 31.

*Free tours of Metrose June 1.

*A free 275th birthday party on the Natchez Bluffs June 1, complete with cake, ice cream, music, exhibits, entertainment and fireworks.

*The premiere of a new play, "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Natchez," May 30 and June 1, costing \$10, or, for students, \$7.

*An Indian-related picnic and tour at the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians May 30 for \$20.

*A guided tour with refreshments May 31 of two historic mansions, city-owned Auburn and the home of Grace MacNeil, Elms Court, as well as Jefferson College for \$15.

*A gala reception May 31 with food, drink and music at the Mansion D'Evereux, modeled after an 1842 party held there honoring Henry Clay for \$20.

*A tour of Stanton Hall June 1 with reception, pre-luncheon refreshments and seated luncheon at the Carriage House Restaurant for \$30.

*A packet of printed materials and souvenirs for \$20.

*All the above activities for a reduced price of \$100 per person.

"One of the sessions attracting much attention is that involving the Haxton family on June 1," said Carolyn Vance Smith of Copiah-Lincoln, co-chairman of the celebration with Becky Junkin Nevill of Copiah-Lincoln and Stuart Johnson, superintendent of the Natchez National Historical Park.

"The Haxtons are incredibly talented people, and all five have written about Natchez, either in fiction, poetry or mu-

sic.

"Of course, students of literature know Ellen Douglas' works, such as 'Black Cloud, White Cloud' and 'A Family's Affairs,' both of which are set in Natchez," Smith said.

"She says not just those books but everything she has ever written has been inspired in some way by Natchez."

Natchez has also served as inspiration for the work of Douglas' three sons, they say.

These men are Brooks Haxton, prize-winning poet who is on the faculty at Sarah Lawrence College in New York; Richard Haxton, musician and actor in Los Angeles; and Ayres Haxton, essayist, who is one of Natchez's representatives to the Mississippi Legislature.

Kenneth Haxton of Greenville, father of three talented sons, is also a writer whose symphonic pieces are set in Natchez.

"As a special gift to the literary celebration, Kenneth Haxton has contributed a Natchez-related crossword puzzle," Smith said. "He regularly writes crossword puzzles for The New York Times, and he tells me that the Natchez



EUDORA WELTY'S work will be discussed by Dr. Alexander Ritter of University of Hamburg, Germany.

Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary

crossword puzzle is of New York Times quality, I should be fun to work."

In addition to the Natchez-related Haxton family, the celebration will focus on another Natchez native, the novelist Alice Walworth Graham, born in Natchez

in 1905.

Author of eight novels, all of which have been published by Doubleday & Company or Dodd, Mead & Co. of New York, Graham will discuss and read from "Indigo Bond," set in Natchez in the late 1800s and "Natchez Woman," set in Natchez in the 1930s.

These novels are called romance novels by Patti Carr Black of the Mississippi Department of

Yerby ("Floodtide").

Another lecture attracting attention is one about Richard Wright, who was born near Natchez in 1908 and spent part of his early childhood in Natchez at the home of his grandparents on Woodlawn Street.

Dr. Michel Fabre of The Sorbonne in Paris, France, author of numerous books and articles about Wright, will discuss Natchez's Pulitzer Prize-winning author in a lecture June 1 called "Richard Wright and Natchez: An Enduring Connection."

A memorial monument honoring Wright was erected on the Natchez Bluffs during the first Natchez Literary Celebration in June 1990.

Another lecture will focus on William Johnson and other early 19th-century free men of color. This lecture, by Dr. John Blassingame, Director of Afro-American Studies at Yale University, is called "Free Men of Color in the south Before 1861."

Johnson, a wealthy barber and landowner in Natchez who died in 1851, kept a diary for 16 years. This diary resulted in a biography called "The Barber of Natchez" and the new play, "A Gentleman of Color: William Johnson and His Nation."

Other lectures will discuss Varina Howell of Natchez, who married the Confederacy's only president, Jefferson Davis, at The Briars in 1845; Eudora Welty, who set several works of fiction in Natchez; Henry Clay, frequent visitor to Natchez in the 1800s; and numerous other individuals and groups.



NATCHEZ NATIVE Richard Wright, 1908-1960, will be discussed by Dr. Michel Fabre of the Sorbonne in Paris. Wright won a Pulitzer Prize for *Native Son*.



NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI
May 29-June 1, 1991

Archives and History, Jackson.

Black will precede Graham in a session on romance novels set in Natchez, commenting on numerous best-selling novelists who used Natchez as the setting for their work in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Some of these novelists are James Street ("By Valour and Arms"), Harris Dickson ("The Ravensels"), Harriet T. Kane ("Bride of Fortune"), Cid Ricketts Sumner ("Tammy Out of Time"), Catherine Warfield ("The Household of Bouverie"), Sarah Ann Dorsey ("Agnes Graham") and "Lucia Dare" and Frank



DR. ROBERT REMINI of the University of Illinois will lecture on Henry Clay's Natchez connection at NLC.



MELROSE, built in 1845, is open free for tours June 1 courtesy of Natchez National Historical Park as part of NLC.

Story by
**CAROLYN
VANCE SMITH**

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COPIAH-LINCOLN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

WESSON, MISSISSIPPI 39191

May 29, 1991

Office of the President

Dear Literary Celebration Participants and Friends:

Welcome to the 1991 Natchez Literary Celebration, co-sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the National Park Service.

It is my honor to be part of this nationally recognized event.

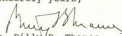
I am particularly proud of our two Co-Lin faculty members, Mrs. Becky Junkin Nevill and Mrs. Carolyn Vance Smith, who have co-chaired this event with Mr. Stuart Johnson, superintendent of the Natchez National Historical Park. They have received widespread cooperation from students, faculty, staff and friends.

The work they are doing fulfills the purposes of the celebration, which are to rejoice in the 275th anniversary of the founding of Natchez in 1716, to raise the world's consciousness of the literary wealth associated with Natchez, and to help support Natchez's tourism industry.

Thank you for coming this year. We invite you back for the third annual celebration, which is set for late May, 1992. Please fill out the form below so you can receive initial information about it.

Welcome again to Natchez and to the celebration. If any of us at Co-Lin can be of service to you, please do not hesitate to call on us.

Sincerely yours,


Dr. Billy B. Thames
President

Please complete, remove, and return this form to the Registration Desk in the lobby of The Natchez Eola Hotel during the celebration or mail it to PO Box 894, Natchez, MS 39121.

YES! Please send me the first round of information about the 1992 Natchez Literary Celebration.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

Names and addresses of others to receive information: (Please use the back of this form.)

The Place to Be.

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Southern Accents

The magazine of fine Southern interiors and gardens

June 1991 \$4.00

CHRONICLE

Words in Natchez, Dances at Duke

And Other Elements of Interest in the South

■ WORDS TO
THE WISE
Natchez, Mississippi,
Literary Celebration,
May 29– June 1

For four days, the oldest settlement on the Mississippi River takes note of its rich legacy of history, literature, and culture—as well as its 275th anniversary. Lecturers on topics as diverse as the city's French origins and native son Richard Wright include Michel Fabre of the Sorbonne, Alexander Ritter of the University of Hamburg, and John Blassingame and Jay Gitlin of Yale. Also special to the event: the William Johnson House will be dedicated to the Natchez National Historical Park. The next day, Pilgrimage Garden Club will host an antique flower show before a fete at D'Evereaux re-creating an 1842 reception held there for Henry Clay. Most other historic houses, including Auburn (below), will be open for tours. The occasion ends on the bluffs of the river, site of a birthday bash Saturday evening.



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History lives in William Johnson house

It was, as the great-grand-niece of William Johnson remarked, "truly a momentous day" in Natchez.

The occasion was last Thursday when this remarkable old city, best known for its colonnaded mansions of the antebellum South, paid homage to a long-departed remarkable citizen: an ex-slave, a freed black, William Johnson.

About 300 of Natchez' leading citizens — white and black — were on hand to witness the symbolic transfer of the 1841 William Johnson House to the Natchez National Historical Park and ponder the uniqueness of the black man whose diary of pre-Civil War Natchez is a literary treasure.

Dedication of the William Johnson House was precisely made a part of the Natchez Literary Celebration, a star-studded three-day educational and cultural event which for the second successive year was presided by the Natchez campus of Coplan-Lincoln Community College.

Johnson had been "discovered" by Southern historians in 1951, a century after he died, when his meticulously-kept 16-year diary — from 1835 to 1851 — was published by Louisiana State University Press.



**Bill
Minor**

Syndicated
columnist

The story of how the leather-bound diary tomes, together with letters and other documents, wound up in the hands of the LSU archives instead of the Mississippi Archives and History is another sad tale of Mississippi impecuniousness.

Sue Iakim, now a history professor at LSU-Alexandria, who had become a research assistant at LSU in 1940 (a year or so after the Johnson diary was acquired), related in Natchez that the Johnson family had first offered the diary and papers to the Mississippi archives, but the Mississippi agency didn't have the money to swing it.

But two LSU professors — Edwin Adams Davis and William Ransom Hogan — who had developed contacts with the family through a Natchez historian, rustled up enough grant money to acquire the documents.

After Davis and Hogan edited

and published the diary, in 1954 they brought out a fascinating volume, "The Barber of Natchez," which drew on the diary, along with considerable additional research on the life and times of William Johnson.

That Johnson, a "free man of color," barbershop proprietor and businessman, rose from being a slave to become an extraordinary figure in antebellum Natchez is abundantly clear. So much so, that when he was murdered by a white man in 1951, he was eulogized at length in the Natchez newspapers as an outstanding citizen. The white leaders of the town flocked to his funeral.

Despite his stature as one of the community's most successful businessmen and the respect he gained in dealings with white friends in the business community, Johnson always stayed within the fine line which divided him from white society.

Johnson, said John W. Blasingame, director of Afro-American studies at Yale University, "prevailed because he provided a much-needed service to whites (as a popular barber) without being a threat. He was very careful not to draw attention to himself."

Even though he could not vote or serve on a jury, Johnson's opinions on politics and public

affairs were solicited and valued by many of the influential whites. It seems quite evident from his writings that Johnson avoided any intimacy with "poor white trash" and associated only with free persons of color who behaved discreetly.

Significantly, Johnson was a slave owner himself and despite his own previous status as a slave, (he had been freed by an act of the Legislature in 1820) he accepted the institution of slavery as a fact of life.

Johnson's murder at age 42, shot in ambush by a white farmer with whom he had been engaged in a lengthy dispute over land boundaries, wrote a tragic footnote to the limitations of the "free" world in which Johnson lived and died.

Despite several apparent conscientious attempts to prosecute the white farmer for the murder, Mississippi law, which barred any black person from testifying against a white man, prevented the man from being convicted, since only blacks witnessed the crime.

But his memory lives on in Natchez, in the two-story Greek Revival townhouse he built 150 years ago and in the diary he left behind. Natchez is still proud to call William Johnson a native son.

Tourists guide to historic Natchez

Fun-filled June sure to keep Natchez rocking

June comes in with a BANG! If you happen to be in Natchez on the first of June, your options for things to do are varied. It will be the last day of the Natchez Literary Celebration, and two free lectures are offered at 9 and 10 a.m. at The Natchez Eola Hotel.

In addition, the historic mansion Melrose will be open free of charge from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. as an added attraction of the Literary Celebration. The landscaped grounds and beautiful house are a "must see" for Natchez visitors.

And that is not all planned for June 1. Get ready for some big fun on the Mississippi River bluffs for the celebration of Natchez's 275th birthday. A hands-on history fair on the bluffs along Broadway will offer crafts demonstrations for kids of all ages.

Everybody likes fireworks, and there's no better way to celebrate this 275th birthday party. The first rocket blast will fill the river city's sky at dusk, complemented by live music, party favors, ice cream and cake. Bring lawn chairs and quilts and take in the sights.

The Rhythm & Blues Review cranks up for the Birthday Bash at the Canal Street Depot at 9 p.m. Tickets are available from



Bobby's Jambalaya

BOBBY DEBLIEUX
Tourism Task Force

area merchants: \$7.50 in advance and \$10 at the gate. Happy Birthday, Natchez!

Also on June 1, for a radical change of pace, is the annual Adams County Sheriff's Rodeo in Liberty Park. Get ready for some exciting wrestling; bull, bareback and bronco riding; calf roping — you name it. Enjoy this bang-up rodeo. The 8 p.m. performance costs \$3 for children and \$5 for adults.

Did you miss the New Orleans Jazz Festival? Well, get ready for Hazzekiah and the House Rockers and just about every other great Mississippi group representing our musical heritage. You will get your chance, right here in Natchez on June 7 and 8.

The second annual Mississippi Heritage Festival kicks off on Friday, the 7th, with a Children's Day at Bluff Park on

Broadway about 2 p.m. Millie Jackson, G.C. Cameron and Tommy O'Beirne with his Hop Beat Band will fill the air with great music from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tickets are \$5 per person at the gate.

Who needs to go to New Orleans for great music when we have, right here in Natchez on June 8, some of Mississippi's best? The bluffs will be rocking and rolling from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Listen to this lineup: Easy Eddy and the Party Rockers and Hazzekiah and the House Rockers (classic rock and rhythm and blues); Y.Z. Ealy and the Dynamic Four and the American Cajun Band (regional); the Christiansaires, the Wings of Glory, Larry Brown and the Gospel Inspirations, the Ford Family Choir and the Franklin County Mass Choir (gospel) — whee! And all of this for just three bucks. Cold drinks, snacks and beer will be sold on the grounds.

Have you been curious about the imposing late-Victorian era houses in Natchez? They were built during a time when architects and builders went wild with design, trying to use every pattern style in the book on one structure.

On June 23, from 2 to 5 p.m., for \$12 a person, you'll have a chance to see four of

these magnificent Victorian houses, all located on Linton Avenue. They are the Jordan, Hess, Rowden and Carby homes. Proceeds from the tour will benefit the Judge George W. Armstrong Library, a worthy cause. Call Natchez Pilgrimage Tours for tickets. No reservations are necessary. Sorry, no single-house tickets are available.

To have some real jollity, join in the Floozie Parade. It's a fun-filled spoof on selecting a "beauty(7)" queen from among the passengers on the Mississippi Queen and Delta Queen steamboats.

The paddlewheelers will race upriver from New Orleans, dock at Natchez Under-the-Hill and drum up a lot of shenanigans while selecting the Floozie Queen. She'll be a floozie all right, with stuffed bra, three-inch-long eyelashes and enough makeup to make Tammy Bakker appear homely by comparison. It's a beer-drinking, hooting and hollering affair at Natchez Under-the-Hill on June 26. Time? Who knows? Play it by ear! Have a cool June.

Robert "Bobby" DeBlieux is chairman of the Natchez Council on Tourism and chief executive officer of Natchez Pilgrimage Tours.

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The Natchez Democrat

SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 1991

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The Natchez Democrat's author, Alice Walworth Graham, peruses one of her romance novels.

Author combines history, romance in Natchez novels

By STACY GRANING
The Natchez Democrat

Alice Walworth Graham doesn't read her own novels, nor does she particularly care to.

"I don't ever want to look at them or read them again," said Graham, the 84-year-old author of seven novels. "When I look at them, I see all the things that were wrong with them."

While she may be overly critical of her works, critics have praised them. James Waddell, in writing about Graham for "Lines of Mississippi Authors," says the Natchez native "has shown herself to be a master teller of tales beyond the ken of her beloved South."

Today the woman often described as "one

of the last true Southern ladies" will speak with Paul Carr Black, director of the museum of the same Department of Archives and History, on "Romance in Natchez: The Setting for Certain Novels." The lecture is part of the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration and begins at 9 a.m. in The Natchez Hotel. It is open to the public.

In addition to Graham's lecture, today's activities will include a special presentation by members of the Hanson family, a Natchez family which includes authors, a poet, musicians and a legislator. "Natchez Threads in a Family Weaving" is the topic for the lectures, which began after a 1 p.m. luncheon at the Carriage House. A ticket is used for the

See GRAHAM, Page 3A

Graham

Continued from Page 1A

luncheon, but the lectures are free to those who have made reservations for the program.

Several of Graham's works, often described as light fiction, are romance novels set in Natchez and the surrounding areas during the turn of the century and the early 1900s. She will read from two of those works, "Natchez Women" and "Indigo Bend" today. Her other works are based in Edwinstown, England.

"They were based on the town,

but the people are imaginary," Graham said of her Natchez works. "But that doesn't make any difference. People will say this character is so-and-so, even when it isn't."

She wrote about the Natchez of her youth — a city where manners flourished, life was simple if not always easy, and the proud homeowners struggled to keep their families and homes intact.

"Growing up in Natchez was very different from now," she said, shaking her head. "It was a small town. . . . Everybody knew everybody. Now I can go down the street and not know a soul."

Although people had a grand/huge and enjoyed life, they were

savaged by economic hardships in the wake of the Civil War and the Great Depression, Graham said. "Nobody had any money, and the people who had the grand homes had even less," she said.

But they had pride, a sense of history and family and a deep reverence for the land, all themes which are intertwined in Graham's works.

"Well, it was not pride exactly," she said in trying to define the quality that drives southerners, especially Natchezians. "You just try to hang on, and sometimes that is difficult."

Graham lives today in the home of her childhood — a house built by

her parents at the turn of the century. She roomed in halls as a child. Today, her son's pet cat roams it and perches atop the antique chairs in the sitting room.

"She's a perfect beast," Graham said of Buttons, the cat. "We hope she's happy here. If she's not, she lets us know and we run around like mad trying to make her happy."

The cat, however, she has learned the lessons of Southern femininity. Graham excels in them.

Her conversations range from the scarcity of birds in her lush, green gardens to making dance lessons as a young girl "because that was how the dance teacher earned her living"

to her dismal attempts to learn to play the piano.

"My poor mother tried to teach music to my sister and me, but we were just awful at it," she said.

But Graham's mother encouraged the young woman to read and "jibber," the interests that led her to become a writer. "Well, don't you think families always influence you?" she said.

And that early encouragement, followed in later years by a college professor's support, sparked Graham to write her novels. Each, she said, developed around a central character more so than a theme or plot. They all started as

Although Graham said some characters occasionally pop into her mind, she has no desire to write again.

"I'd much rather read somebody else's books," she said.



The Natchez Democrat/Barbara Grant Miller

THE HAXTONS: The Haxton family gathers on the porch of the family home in rural Adams County. Josephine Haxton, who writes under the pen name of Ellen Douglas, is in the center with grandson Taylor. The other adult Haxtons in the family photograph are Ayres, Emily, Kenneth, Brooks, Richard and Francis. The other Haxton children are Corinne, Brooks and Isaac. A Natchez Literary Celebration program today at the Carriage House Restaurant will feature readings and reminiscences by the Haxtons, whose creative talents include writing, composing and acting.

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Saturday, June 1, 1991



The Natchez Democrat/Barbara Gentry Kaiser

LET'S CELEBRATE: Katie McCarstle, Kemi Simmons, Becky Johnson and Ronnie Cox hang a banner proclaiming Natchez's 275th birthday today. Planned for the celebration, which begins at 3 p.m. on the bluff, is a party, complete with cake that will be cut at 5:30 p.m., a fireworks display at dusk, and a street dance at The Canal Street Depot featuring The Bluz Boys. The dance begins at 9 p.m. Tickets are \$10 at the gate.

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Natchez has party on bluff

Fireworks, cake, song celebrate 275th birthday

By JEFFREY BRUNER
The Natchez Democrat

Natchez turned 275 in style Saturday as people celebrated on the bluffs with song, food and fireworks.

Miss-Lou residents spent an afternoon watching craft demonstrations, listening to music and eating ribs and burgers.

Like all birthday parties, there was cake, thanks to Copiah-Lincoln Community College vocational students and 2,000 scoops of ice cream, courtesy of Dairy Queen.

But it was also a day of history — and a day of people.

Marvin Walters and Ricky Phipps volunteered their time to tell stories to children.

Walters, a senior at Natchez High School, entertained the kids with story of the "The Boy Who Cried Wolf." His sweeping gestures and animated expressions kept eyes wide open. After the boy cried wolf for the final time and nobody came, Walters delivered the famous lesson of the fable: "No one believes a liar, even when he's telling the truth."

Phipps, a sophomore at Natchez High, then told the story of Henry, the boy who didn't listen and always ate more than he should have. Then the rains came to Henry's island, he couldn't fit on the boat because he had become so big. So Henry ended up drifting into the distance.

The end.

Nearby, Louisiana farrier Joe

Henderson sweated in the heat as he slowly banged out a fork on the anvil. He heated the fork until parts glowed a bright orange, then put it on the anvil, banging his hammer against the fork until it took the right shape.

The loud, sharp, shrill pitch of the banging caused the children to cover their ears. Henderson, a blacksmith who fits four or five horses with shoes every day, said the noise has never bothered his ears. The heat, though, was something that he couldn't escape on the muggy afternoon.

Over at the gazebo, the city was thanked by National Weather Service officials for its long history of service. Natchez is the oldest active cooperative centennial weather station in the United States, with records dating back to 1799.

Two of Mississippi's former governors paid the city birthday wishes.

"People always feel they can come home again to Natchez," said Gov. Bill Allain, who said the city has a "sense of place" that always draws people back.

Natchezians should never forget their heritage, said Gov. William Winter.

"I've been coming to Natchez for a long time and I've always been impressed by the unique understanding you have of your heritage," Winter said. "I hope you will never take that heritage for granted."

Later at dusk, the crowd watched the skies light up with a fireworks display sponsored by Natchez Coca-Cola. After the show, the Canal Street Depot came alive with the sounds of The

See CELEBRATE, Page 8A

Celebrate

Continued from Page 1A

Bluz Boys, a 15-piece show band. Proceeds from the dance will benefit the Natchez Christmas Parade.

The official birthday bash kicked off about two hours earlier with entertainment by the Holy Family Gospel Choir.

And to celebrate the day, the crowd sang "Natchez, I Hear Her Calling," a song written by Natchez's Alvin Shelby especially for the celebration.

"Oh Natchez, I hear her calling
Her future's as rich as her history
Oh Natchez, the voice keeps calling

So much to offer, so much to see."

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Natchez feasts on Haxton talents

By JEFFREY BRUNER
The Natchez Democrat

It was a literary and musical feast, family style.

Josephine Haxton and Kenneth Haxton and their three sons entertained a crowd at the Carriage House Restaurant Saturday afternoon with their fiction, songs and poems.

State Rep. Ayers Haxton, who represents Adams County in the Mississippi Legislature, moderated the program. Haxton said people had been asking him all week long why he hadn't gone into the arts, instead working the family's farm.

"That's kind of like asking the only non-

performing member of the Flying Gambini family why he doesn't choose to be shot out of a cannon," Haxton quipped.

He then added that while he didn't sing or write, he was available this summer to do electrical work.

Josephine Ayres Haxton, who writes under the pen name Ellen Douglas, read from some of her most acclaimed work — "A Family's Affairs" (1961) and "The Rock Cried Out" (1979).

Currently the writer-in-residence at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, she has had novels named among the five best works of fiction in 1962 and 1963 by *The New York*

See HAXTON, Page 8A

Haxton

Continued from Page 1A

Times.

"We've been coming and going and coming back for years," she said of Natchez's influence on her work.

She read from a passage from "A Family's Affairs" that detailed a ferry crossing of the Mississippi River through the eyes of a young girl.

Silver Street, the cathedral that is now St. Mary's Catholic Church, and the big oak trees came to life in front of the girl as the ferry docked at the area now known as Natchez Under-the-Hill.

Brooks Haxton entertained the crowd with poems he had written about Natchez and the people who live here. Most of the poems came from two collections — "Traveling Company" (1989) and "Dominion" (1986).

Haxton, a visiting poet at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York, has been published in the *American Poetry Review*, *Atlantic*, the *New England Review* and the *Paris Review*, among other publications.

"Art was like food — you had to have some all the time," he said of growing up in an artistic family.

He read a poem that detailed the horrors of having your father conduct a rag-tag orchestra in the living room of the house every Tuesday night and having to try to sleep in the next room. The images of a committed yet amateur group of musicians brought laughter from the crowd.

Richard Haxton sang songs about the heritage of Natchez. One selection, "The Ballad of Batisie," described the 1830s as the Choctaw Indians were uprooted and driven to Oklahoma. "Liberty Road" detailed the atmosphere and feelings created by the Ayres home on that road.

The music of Kenneth Haxton filled the room, ranging from a lively and dissonant composition for piano called "Comic March" to a four-movement work that put Josephine Haxton's poems to music.

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY: Miss-Lou residents gather at the gazebo decorated for Natchez's 275th.

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BIRTHDAY CAKE FOR RIVERTOWN: Kathy Madden of Copiah-Lincoln Vo-Tech Center, with children Gavin and Claudia, finishes a birthday cake that was served at the birthday party on the bluff Saturday. The cake was made by her former students.

The Natchez Democrat photos/Barbara Conrad Kiser



The Natchez Democrat/Barbara Gerard Kaiser

MUW GRADS: Patty Hosch hosted a reception for Dr. Clyda Rent, president of the school, while Rent was in town for the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration. Some of the graduates attending the reception included, from left, Susie M. Mariens of Woodville, a 1935 graduate; Linda Bailey, president of the Southwest Mississippi alumni association; Rent; and Hosch, a 1970 graduate.

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History lives in William Johnson house

It was, as the great-grandniece of William Johnson remarked, "truly a momentous day" in Natchez.

The occasion was last Thursday when this remarkable old city, best known for its colonnaded mansions of the antebellum South, paid homage to a long-departed remarkable citizen: an ex-slave, a freed black, William Johnson.

About 300 of Natchez' leading citizens — white and black — were on hand to witness the symbolic transfer of the 1841 William Johnson House to the Natchez National Historical Park and ponder the uniqueness of the black man whose diary of pre-Civil War Natchez is a literary treasure.

Dedication of the William Johnson House was precisely made a part of the Natchez Literary Celebration, a star-studded three-day educational and cultural event which for the second successive year was presented by the Natchez campus of Coplan-Lincoln Community College.

Johnson had been "discovered" by Southern historians in 1951, a century after he died, when his meticulously-kept 16-year diary — from 1835 to 1851 — was published by Louisiana State University Press.



Bill Minor

Syndicated columnist

The story of how the leather-bound diary tomes, together with letters and other documents, wound up in the hands of the LSU archives instead of the Mississippi Archives and History is another sad tale of Mississippi impecuniousness.

Sue Eakin, now a history professor at LSU-Alexandria, who had become a research assistant at LSU in 1940 (a year or so after the Johnson diary was acquired), related in Natchez that the Johnson family had first offered the diary and papers to the Mississippi archives, but the Mississippi agency didn't have the money to swing it.

But two LSU professors — Edwin Adams Davis and William Ransom Hogan — who had developed contacts with the family through a Natchez historian, rustled up enough grant money to acquire the documents.

After Davis and Hogan edited

and published the diary, in 1954 they brought out a fascinating volume, "The Barber of Natchez," which drew on the diary, along with considerable additional research on the life and times of William Johnson.

That Johnson, a "free man of color," barbershop proprietor and businessman, rose from being a slave to become an extraordinary figure in antebellum Natchez is abundantly clear. So much so, that when he was murdered by a white man in 1951, he was eulogized at length in the Natchez newspapers as an outstanding citizen. The white leaders of the town flocked to his funeral.

Despite his stature as one of the community's most successful businessmen and the respect he gained in dealings with white friends in the business community, Johnson always stayed within the fine line which divided him from white society.

Johnson, said John W. Blasingame, director of Afro-American studies at Yale University, "prevailed because he provided a much-needed service to whites (as a popular barber) without being a threat. He was very careful not to draw attention to himself."

Even though he could not vote or serve on a jury, Johnson's opinions on politics and public

affairs were solicited and valued by many of the influential whites. It seems quite evident from his writings that Johnson avoided any intimacy with "poor white trash" and associated only with free persons of color who behaved discreetly.

Significantly, Johnson was a slave owner himself and despite his own previous status as a slave, (he had been freed by an act of the Legislature in 1820) he accepted the institution of slavery as a fact of life.

Johnson's murder at age 42, shot in ambush by a white farmer with whom he had been engaged in a lengthy dispute over land boundaries, wrote a tragic footnote to the limitations of the "free" world in which Johnson lived and died.

Despite several apparent conscientious attempts to prosecute the white farmer for the murder, Mississippi law, which barred any black person from testifying against a white man, prevented the man from being convicted, since only blacks witnessed the crime.

But his memory lives on in Natchez, in the two-story Greek Revival townhouse he built 150 years ago and in the diary he left behind. Natchez is still proud to call William Johnson a native son.

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People

Pilgrimage Garden Club selects the winners of annual flower show

The Pilgrimage Garden Club recently announced winners in its 1991 flower show.

The show, titled "Natchez, 1716-1991, Celebrating the City's 275th Anniversary Through History and Horticulture," was held at antebellum D'Evereux in conjunction with the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration.

Chairmen of the show were Mimi Hinson and Suzanne Clifford. Winners may collect their ribbons at Stanton Hall, Hinson said.

The winners included:

Adult design division
Class 1, "A Salute to the Senator": Selah Willard, first place; Karen Haile, second place; Augusta Smith, third place; Lisa Swinny, fourth place;

Class 2, "Perfume for a Presidential Hopeful": Margaret Brown, first place; Pam Harris, second place; Cheryl Person, third place; Kathleen Curlee, fourth place;

Class 3, "An Ovation for an Orator": Cindy Galloway, first place; Pam Harris, second place; Susan Swinny, third place; Prissy Brown, fourth place.

Class 4, "Receiving Line": Fontaine Gremillion, first place; Pam Clayton, second place; Nancy McClemore, third place; Katherine Calhoun, fourth place;

Class 5, "Refreshments": Denise Geter, first place; Margaret Cooley, second place; Stephanie Butts, third place; Sharon Turner, fourth place;

Class 6, "Respite After the Party": Christy Williams, first place; Mary Partridge, second place; Betty Lou Brown, third place; Sally Armstrong, fourth place;

Class 7, "Retiring for the Evening": Novice division: Virginia Netterville, first place; Lynn Bradford, second place; Dana Davis, third place; Pam Priest, fourth place; Sandra Ellard, fourth place;

Top Design Awards: Cindy Galloway, tri-color, Freda Payne Award and sweepstakes award; Fontaine Gremillion, tri-color; Virginia Netterville, president's award

Artistic crafts:

Class 1 "Nosegays, Posies and

Bouquets": Mary Bryant Smith, first place; Mimi Hinson, second place; Pam Harris, third place;

Class 2, "Of Coiffures and Waistcoats": Lisa Swinny, first place; Mary Bryant Smith, second place; Mimi Hinson, third place.

Educational exhibits: Roxie Young, Teri Tillman, Lisa Allain, Mary Lou England, award of appreciation.

Youth groups, design:

Class 1: Lee Waycaster, first place; Ashley Kingsafer, second place; Alexis Whittington, third place; Claire Waycaster, fourth place; Christine Newman, fourth place; Catherine Smith, fourth place;

Class 2: Summer Whittington, first place; Kelly James, second place; Anna L. Smith, third place; Blythe Junkin, fourth place; Jordan Junkin, fourth place; Sarah Mayfield, fourth place.

Class 3: Amanda Butler, first place; Christine Murray, second place

Top design awards for youth: Summer Whittington, junior achievement; Amanda Butler, high school gardeners award

Horticulture, youth groups:

Class 1: Blythe Junkin, Jordan Junkin, Anna L. Smith, Alexis Whittington, first place; Ashley Kingsafer, second place;

Class 2: Ashley Kingsafer, Catherine Smith, Blythe Junkin, Jordan Junkin, Anna L. Smith, Mary Alyce Cooley, Summer Whittington, Alexis Whittington, first place; Katie Bailey, Alexis Whittington, second place.

Class 3: Catherine Smith, Blythe Junkin, Anna L. Smith, Katie Bailey, first place; Mary Alyce Cooley, second place;

Top award, junior horticulture: Alexis Whittington, junior achievement;

Horticulture Awards

Section A, annuals: Class 7, Suzanne Clifford, first place; Selah Willard, first place; Jan Byrne, first place;

Section B, perennials: Class 8, Peggy Murray, first place; Edna

Ferguson, second place; Anne Dyer, third place;

Class 9, Peggy Murray, first place; Anne Dyer, second place;

Class 10, Peggy Murray, first place; Anne Dyer, second place;

Class 13, Anne Dyer, second place; Mary Bryant Smith, third place;

Class 14, Jackie Butts, six first place and one second place; Mary Bryant Smith, two first place, one second place and fourth place;

Class 15, Alice Feltus, first place; Anne Dyer, first place;

Class 19, Mary Bryant Smith, second place;

Class 20, Anne Dyer, first place;

Class 22, Edna Ferguson, first place and second place; Glenn Haltom, first place; Lisa Swinny, first place; Anne Dyer, first place; Selah Willard, two first place, one second place; Jan Byrne, first place; Mary Bryant Smith, first place and third place; Alice Feltus, two second place; Suzanne Clifford, two third place;

Section C, Roses: Class 23, Carla Johnson, three first place and two second place;

Class 24, Carla Johnson, second place;

Class 28, Carla Johnson, first place;

Class 29, Edna Ferguson, two first place and two second place;

Class 30, J.T. Smith, three first place, two second place; Ruth McWilliams, second place;

Section D, other bulbs: Class 32, Suzanne Clifford, first place; Anne Dyer, two first place; Selah Willard, two second place;

Class 32, Mary Bryant Smith, first place;

Class 34, Anne Dyer, three first place, one second place; Alice Feltus, four first place; Selah Willard, first place; Jeanette Feltus, first place; Mary Bryant Smith, six first place, one second place;

Section E, container grown:

Class 41, Jan Byrne, two first place; Susannah Byrne, first place;

Class 47, Jan Byrne, first place;

Class 62, Susannah Byrne, first place;

Class 63, Jan Byrne, two first place;

Section F, trees and shrubs: Class 65, Mary Bryant Smith, first place; Edna Ferguson, second place; Carla Lea, third place;

Class 66, Jan Byrne, first place; Anne Dyer, second place and fourth place; Edna Ferguson, third place;

Class 68, Selah Willard, first place;

Class 70, Alice Feltus, first place; Edna Ferguson, third place;

Class 73, Peggy Murray, first place; Edna Ferguson, first place and third place;

Class 76, Glenn Haltom, first place; Selah Willard, first place; Debra Williams, first place; Mary Bryant Smith, second place and third place;

Class 77, Mimi Hinson, second place; Alice Feltus, second place;

Class 88, Anne Dyer, first place;

Class 89, Alice Feltus, first place; Edna Ferguson, second place; Cindy Galloway, third place; Carla Lea, fourth place;

Class 91, Vixie, Lani Riches, first place; Edna Ferguson, second place;

Class 92, Anne Dyer, first place; Mary Bryant Smith, first place; Mimi Hinson, two first place; Cindy Galloway, first place; Edna Ferguson, two second place; Glenn Haltom, second place, third place;

Section G, vines: Class 93, Edna Ferguson, two first place; Jeanette Feltus, first place; Selah Willard, second place; Carla Johnson, second place;

Class 94, Selah Willard, two first place and one second place;

Section H, other: Class 95, Anne Dyer, first place.

Top horticulture awards: Mary Bryant Smith, award of horticultural excellence; Carla Johnson, award of merit; Jan Byrne, award of merit; Mary Bryant Smith, sweepstakes award and Katherine Miller Award; Mimi Hinson, arboreal award.

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You can't
match us
at Natchez!

Natchez
THE NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT
100 N. MAIN, LINCOLN MEMORIAL

P The Natchez Democrat PEOPLE

C
SECTION

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 1991



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FLOWER SHOW WINNERS: Grand winners in the Pilgrimage Garden Club flower show include, from left, Mini Hinson, who won the arboreal award; Carla Johnson, who won an award of merit; Mary Bryant Smith, who won the award of horticulture excellence; the Katherine Miller Award and the sweepstakes award; Virginia Netterville, who won the president's award; and Fontaine Grenition, who won the tri-color award. The flower show, titled "Natchez, 1716-1991: Celebrating the City's 275th Anniversary Through History and Horticulture," was held last Friday at Dunleith in connection with the second annual Natchez Literary Celebration. The flower show designs also served as the backdrop for a reception hosted that evening at the antebellum mansion. Not pictured are Cindy Galloway, who won the tri-color award, the sweepstakes award and the Freda Payne award, and Jan Byrne, who won an award of merit.

LOCATION/TRANSPORTATION

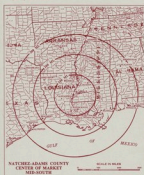
Natchez, Miss. . . . located approximately 100 miles from Jackson, Miss. and 80 miles from Baton Rouge, La., is accessible via U.S. Hwy. 61 N/S, Hwys. 84 & 98 E/W, and The Natchez Trace Parkway.

A-1 Rent-A-Car of Natchez — 24 hour, free delivery and pick up, (402) 476-0764.

Bus Terminal Charter & Tours — For charter and group tours, and convention shuttles (601) 445-5391 or 445-5304.

Natchez Public Transit — Dial-a-ride (601) 442-5082, Mon.-Fri., 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Taxi Cab Service — (Adams County Car Rental) 24 hours a day - out-of-town services available (601) 445-9831.



WEATHER

Average Daily High

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.
60	63	70	78	85	90
July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
92	92	88	80	69	63

ACCOMMODATIONS

HOTELS & MOTELS

Best Western Prentiss (128 rooms)	800-528-1234 or 442-1691
Days Inn (120 rooms)	800-325-2525 or 445-8291
The Guest House (18 rooms)	442-1054
Holiday Inn (136 rooms)	800-HOLIDAY or 442-3686
Natchez Eola Hotel (125 rooms)	800-888-9140 or 445-6500
Natchez Inn (38 rooms)	442-0321
Ramada Inn (182 rooms)	800-2HAMADA or 446-6311
Scottish Inn (190 Rooms)	442-9141
River Park Hotel (146 rooms)	446-6888
Terrace Motel (21 rooms)	445-5516
Trace Motel (21 rooms)	442-7441

BED & BREAKFAST ANTEBELLUM HOMES

For reservations in the following homes call Natchez Pilgrimage Tours: 800-647-6742

The Burn (10 rooms)	Monmouth (18 rooms)
D'Arveux (1 room)	Mount Repose (3 rooms)
Dunleith (11 rooms)	Ravenna (3 rooms)
Eugin* (2 rooms)	Shields Town House* (2 rooms)
Hope Farm (4 rooms)	Stanton Hall (3 rooms)
Lansdowne (1 room)	Texada (5 rooms)
Linden (2 rooms)	Twin Oaks (1 room)

For reservations in the following homes call direct:

Auburn (4 rooms)	442-5361
The Briars (16 rooms)	446-9654
Pleasant Hill (2 rooms)	442-7674
Ravenesside (4 rooms, Victorian Home)	442-8015
Weymouth Hall (3 rooms)	445-2304

*Denotes separate cottage w/kitchen facilities

DINING

Traditional, Southern and Louisiana style food. Specialty — *crêpe*.

The Annex Tea Room — 209 Franklin, 446-6544. 65 seats total, private dining available.
Best Western Prentiss — Hwy. 61 South, 442-1691. 200 seats total plus banquet facilities/buffet served.

Cafo LaSalle/Juleps Restaurant — Natchez Eola Hotel, 110 N. Pearl, 445-6000. 45 seats gourmet dining room, 80 seats casual garden view dining.
Centina Restaurant — 207 State, 446-6456. 34 seats.
Carrage House — 401 High, 445-5151. 132 seats.
Cock-of-the-Walk — Under-the-Hill, 446-8520. 90 seats.
Doug's Restaurant — 410 Main, 446-7193. 150 seats plus 2 banquet rooms, 40 cash/buffet served.
Elsie's Diner — 1187 N. Pearl, 442-7127. 50 seats.
The Fare — 109 N. Pine, 442-5299. 35 seats.
Human's Chinese Restaurant — Hwy. 61 South, 442-2121. 100 seats plus 1 banquet room/buffet served.
King's Tavern — 619 Jefferson, 446-8845. 264 seats.
Mammy's Cupboard — Hwy. 61 South, 442-9554. 45 seats.
Magnolia Bar & Grill — 29 Silver St., 446-7670. 34 seats.
Natchez Diner — Days Inn, Hwy. 61 South, 445-8291. 24-hour diner, 50 seats.
The Natchez Landing, Ltd. — Under-the-Hill, 442-6639. 92 seats inside.
The Parlor — 116 S. Canal, 446-8511. 40 seats.
Pompos Palate — 211 N. Pearl, 445-4946. 60 seats.
Rainforest Restaurant — Holiday Inn, Hwy. 61 North, 442-3666. 75 seats plus 50 private dining/buffet served.
Ramada Hilltop Restaurant — 130 John R. Junkin, 446-6311. 175 seats total plus banquet facilities/buffet served.
River Galley Restaurant — 312 Main St., 445-8513.
River Park Restaurant — 645 S. Canal, 446-6888. 150 seats plus banquet facilities.
Scrooge's — 315 Main, 446-5922. 50 seats.
Sidetrack Restaurant — 200 Broadway St., 446-6510. 150 seats.
Sissy's Nothin' Fenced Deli — 112 N. Commerce, 442-6886. 40 seats.
Shoney's — Hwy. 61 South, 442-3761. 200 seats.
South China Restaurant — 495 John R. Junkin, 442-8548. 80 seats total, 20 private.
Western Suzlin — 288 John R. Junkin, 446-7052. 270 seats including banquet room/buffet served.

FAST FOOD RESTAURANTS:

Belmont Shake Shop — Hwy. 61 South, 445-4581.

A History of the College

Historic Jefferson College was incorporated by an act of the first General Assembly of the Mississippi Territory on May 13, 1802. Named in honor of President Thomas Jefferson, "President of the United States and president of the American Philosophical Society," it was the first educational institution in the Territory. Thirty-four men, led by Territorial Governor William C. C. Claiborne as president, were chosen as members of the first Board of Trustees of the college.

During the first year of incorporation, the decision to locate the college in Washington was made. Forty-seven acres of land, where the college was to be constructed, were donated by John and James Foster and Randal Gibson. The Jefferson College Board of Trustees was continually plagued by financial problems, including a lack of operating funds. To make matters worse, families in the Natchez region had little interest in the new college, and continued to send their children east for an education.

Jefferson College finally opened its doors on January 7, 1811, as a preparatory school. The college had purchased the old Washington Academy building in 1810, and fifteen students were present when its doors opened.

Funds from Congress, the Legislature and private citizens led the way to the new prosperity. By 1817 Jefferson College was no longer just a preparatory school but a full-fledged college, and construction had begun on a new building which would be called the East Wing. Designed by Natchez architect Levi Weeks, the East Wing was built by Lewis Evans of Natchez, who completed the structure in 1819.



In 1830 the college purchased the Methodist Church building which had housed the 1817 Mississippi statehood convention, renovating it in 1832 for use by the college. Montgomery and Keyes, another Natchez firm, built the West Wing of the college, completing it in 1839.

The outbreak of the Civil War forced the closing of Jefferson College in 1863. It reopened in 1866, again as a preparatory school. From that time until 1964, when its doors closed forever, Jefferson College remained a preparatory school. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the school became known as Jefferson Military College and continued under that name until it closed in 1964, but the school was never able to reclaim its place as center of the intellectual community of the Natchez region and the state.

Intellectual and Cultural Influence

During its pre-Civil War years Jefferson College was a major influence on the intellectual and cultural development of frontier Mississippi. From its administrative officers, faculty, and students came early experimentation in agriculture and scientific discoveries that directed the course of Mississippi in the first half of the 19th century.

Jefferson College Today

Historic Jefferson College, an official state historic site listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is located on Highway 61 six miles east of Natchez in Washington, Mississippi. Restoration has been begun by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, a state

agency which administers Jefferson College and other significant historical properties within the state, as well as archival, library, museum, and publications programs.

The first phase of the restoration of Historic Jefferson College was completed in 1977 and includes the exterior restoration of the West Wing, exterior and interior restoration of the East and West Kitchens and brick paving behind the West Wing. The second phase of the restoration, completed in 1984, includes the partial interior restoration of the West Wing and the exterior restoration of the East Wing and Raymond Hall. A portion of the President's House exterior was also restored during this period. The restoration of Historic Jefferson College has been aided by The Friends of Jefferson College, Inc., a non-profit corporation which was organized to stimulate interest in and support of the Jefferson College restoration project among the private sector.

Visitors may tour the exhibition buildings and the grounds of this historic campus. A visitor reception area, staff offices and rest rooms are located in Prosper Hall, a 20th century structure named for Colonel C. E. Prosper, a former superintendent of Jefferson College.

A nature trail winds through the woods, passing St. Catherine Creek, the college cemetery and Ellicott Springs. Andrew Ellicott camped by these springs in 1797 prior to his surveying the 31st parallel to determine the dividing line between the territories of the United States and Spain.

Interpretive markers also designate the President's House and the site of the Methodist Church where the 1817 Statehood Convention was held.

The grounds are open from sunrise to sundown and the buildings are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily except Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.



Historic Jefferson College
P.O. Box 100

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MELROSE



Located within the National city limits on
Melrose Montebello Parkway off Bourgeois
Pension Drive.

Open daily except Christmas Day. Grounds
are open without charge
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Guided house tours are offered every half
hour 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Admission fees for house tours are as
follows:

Adults \$4.00
Ages 4-17 \$2.00
62 and above \$2.00
Under 6 No Charge



NATCHES NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



1800s. Between 1660 and 1729 the
Grand Village was the center of activity
for the Narbonne Indians. During
this period the French explored and
settled the region. Between 1660 and
the French and the Narbonne were not
at first but deteriorated from 1710
to 1729 when the Narbonne were
the French settlement in New France.
The French settlement, and the Narbonne
included in its center after their exodus
in 1729.

HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Based on our knowledge of evidence
documentary, ethnographic that the
Narbonne lived in the Grand Village of
the Narbonne Indians. The historical
evidence is based on the contemporary
writings of French explorers, priests
and historians. The archaeological
evidence consists of observations and
excavations made at the site. The Narbonne culture ap-
parently reached its zenith in the mid-



A TOUR OF THE GRAND VILLAGE



All the Narbonne culture artifacts and remains
of the Narbonne culture have been found in the
Grand Village of the Narbonne Indians. The
Narbonne culture is based on the evidence
found in the Grand Village. The Narbonne
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*"From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure:
Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary"*

MTN

The Place To Be.

The NATCHEZ  *Hotel*

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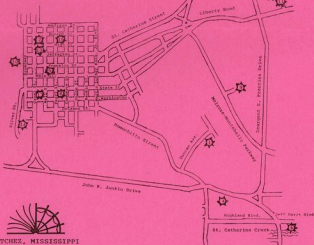
From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates Its 275th Anniversary

1. Arkura
2. Charokas
3. O'Everness
4. Elm Court
5. Gola Hotel
6. Grand Village of the Natchez Indians
7. Jefferson College
8. Magnolia Hall
9. Salines
10. Natchez Bluffs
11. Natchez Convention Center (Main Site)
12. Natchez High School
13. Natchez Municipal Auditorium
14. Natchez Under the Hill (Silver Street)
15. Salma Plantation
16. Stanton Hall
17. William Johnson House (210 State Street)

This map has been revised to show

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

MISSISSIPPI RIVER BRIDGE



NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI
May 29-June 1, 1991

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U D 41 S.

About William Johnson. . .

William Johnson was born in Natchez in 1809 and died and was buried there in 1851. Born into slavery, he was freed in 1820, and he operated the leading barber shop in Natchez, with, at times, smaller shops in town and in Natchez Under-the-Hill, from 1830 until his death. He also engaged in many other enterprises, such as buying, selling, and renting property; lending money; renting horses, wagons, and carriages; trading in cattle and produce; and farming. He trained many free black men and some slaves, several of whom he owned, in the barbering trade, one of the few professions which blacks were allowed to practice in the South in pre-Civil War days.

About the playwright. . .

Evans Harrington has written novels, stories, essays, film scripts, and books and lyrics for musical comedies. A life-long Mississippian, he has been concerned all his adult life about the treatment of black people by his fellow whites. He lives in Oxford, where he is Professor Emeritus of English at The University of Mississippi.

About the producer/director. . .

Richard Alwood, a native and resident of Ferriday, Louisiana, is principal of Ferriday Lower Elementary School. He has directed several Natchez Little Theatre productions, including *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Eccentricities of a Nightingale*, *I Never Sang for My Father*, *Gypsy*, *Fanny Girl*, and *The Effects of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds*. He has appeared in several Natchez Little Theatre productions, including *The Rainmaker*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, and *Southern Exposure*. He and his wife, the former Sheila Salvo of Natchez, have three children.

About the leading actor. . .

Donald Lewis, Jr., of New Orleans, who plays the leading role of William Johnson, is a professional actor who has trained with the New Orleans Center of Creative Arts and has appeared in The Smithsonian Institution's Discovery Theatre. He has also toured New Jersey and New York in an African-American Folktale show, is currently in Louisiana Traveling Kwanzaa Show, a repertoire group, and has appeared in *Macbeth* in the Louisiana Shakespeare Festival in New Orleans as well as in *Stromboli*, *Class Remains*, and *Straighten Up and Fly Right* at the 1991 Jazz Festival. He is a founder of CAST productions and is a member of Chakula Cha-Jua Theatre Company and Alliance of Community Theaters.

This project is supported in part by a grant from the Mississippi Arts Commission.
Cover design by Sharon Gossner.

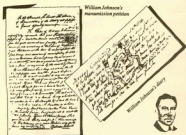
Synopsis of Scenes

ACT I

Scene 1	June 16, 1851 Natchez, 1830 Natchez, 1816	William Johnson's bedroom Jim Miller's barber shop Jim Miller's barber shop Courtroom
Scene 2	Natchez, 1834 February, 1835	Johnson's barber shop Barber shop Theatre lobby
Scene 3	Natchez, 1837	Barber shop
Scene 4		Barber shop Steven's room Restaurant under-the-hill

ACT II

Scene 1	Natchez, 1851 Natchez, 1837 Natchez, 1841 Natchez, 1851	Bedroom Barber shop Barber shop Bedroom
Scene 2	Natchez, 1841 Natchez, 1842	Barber shop McCurry's parlor Johnson's study
Scene 3	Natchez, 1851	Bedroom Study Bedroom Front porch of farm house
Scene 4	Natchez, 1851	Barber shop Bedroom Woods near Johnson's home Bedroom



William Johnson was born a slave in 1809 and was freed in 1820. He became proprietor of a barber shop in downtown Natchez and used his trade to launch himself into other aspects of commercial enterprise. Johnson earned an important position in American history by keeping a daily diary, which provides the most complete account of the life of a free black in the antebellum South. This published diary documents the extraordinary rise of a black man from bondage to freedom and to an established position as a substantial citizen of Natchez, a position which is reflected in his surviving two-story Greek Revival townhouse. Johnson's diary chronicles the 1841 construction of the residence, for which Johnson served as his own building contractor. Johnson was murdered in 1851 over a land dispute, and the legal restrictions of race prevented the conviction of his murder. Under Mississippi law, a black man, slave or free, could not testify in court against a white man, and the only witnesses to the crime were black. Johnson's descendants owned the house until 1976, when it was purchased by the Natchez Garden Club in an effort to insure its preservation.

The Dedication of the House of William Johnson to The Natchez National Historical Park National Park Service United States Department of the Interior 5:30 p.m., Thursday, May 30, 1991 Natchez, Mississippi

Presiding The Honorable William F. Winter
Former Governor of Mississippi and
President, Board of Trustees
Mississippi Department of Archives and History
Jackson, Mississippi

Pledge of Allegiance

Introduction of Special Guests in the Audience

Introduction of Platform Guests

The Honorable Thad Cochran, U. S. Senator, Mississippi

The Honorable Trent Lott, U. S. Senator, Mississippi

The Honorable Mike Parker, U. S. Representative
4th District, Mississippi

The Honorable G. V. "Sonny" Montgomery
U. S. Representative
3rd District, Mississippi

The Honorable Brad Dye, Lt. Governor
State of Mississippi

The Honorable Robert M. Dearing, State Senator
Adams County, Mississippi

The Honorable Barney Schohy, State Representative
Adams County, Mississippi

The Honorable Ayres
Adams County

The Honorable
Board of Supervisors

The Honorable
Natchez

Dr. Billy B.
Capitol-Lincoln

Mr. Elbert
Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Mrs. George
House of Representatives

Mrs. Douglas M.
Natchez

Introduction of Guest Speaker

"50 Years W
Dr.

Introduction of Keynote Speaker

Mr. He
Deputy Director

Symb

Mrs. George M.
Mayor of

Holy Family
Alvin S.

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was a slave in 1867 in Natchez. William Johnson was freed in 1820 and moved from his birthplace to the profession of tailoring, a popular trade among free blacks in the South in an early age. In the same profession of his own tailoring shop, he used his trade to benefit other freedmen and women.

Johnson earned an important position in the community. He was one of the first blacks to own a property in the city of Natchez. He was a member of the Natchez Association of the Freedmen, which was founded in 1845 by Frederick Douglass and others. Johnson was a member of the Natchez Association of the Freedmen, which was founded in 1845 by Frederick Douglass and others.



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Canal Street Depot and Market

Welcome to the neighborhood. House of William Johnson!
The House of William Johnson, 210 State Street, is right next door to the Canal Street Depot and Market, corner of Canal and State streets. The historic house will be dedicated to the Natchez National Historical Park at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, May 30, 1991.
All the merchants of Canal Street Depot and Market invite the public to the free dedication ceremony and afterwards to the reception in the Canal Street Depot courtyard.
Welcome to the friendliest neighborhood in Natchez!

KELLY'S KIDS
Factory outlet children's wear

FASHIONAIRE
Beauty salon extraordinaire

CAROLINE CLASSICS
Factory outlet children's wear

SOUTHERN TRADITIONS
Specialty gifts

CREATIVE TRAVEL
For great trips

X-PRESS YOUR COTTON
Specialty T-shirts, sweaters

NATCHEZ PILGRIMAGE TOURS
Your tourist headquarters

THE CARRIAGE COMPANIES
For nostalgic horse drawn tours of Natchez

CANAL STREET DEPOT AND MARKET
Headquarters (601) 442-2340

BOLL WEEVILS & DANIELS BASKETRY
Victorian, gift, accessories

PLANTATION GOURMET
Southern goodies

THE PARLOR RESTAURANT
Great meals cooked to order

PLANTATION PECAN AND GIFT COMPANY
Local pecans, homemade candy

YESTERYEAR'S
Antiques and collectibles



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BOOKSHOP HOURS



THE NATCHEZ EOLA HOTEL LOBBY

Wednesday, May 29	1 - 5:45 p.m.
Thursday, May 30	8:30 a.m.-8 p.m.
Friday, May 31	8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
Saturday, June 1	8:30 a.m.-12 noon

New copies of books by many of the 1991 lecturers will be for sale, along with new copies of Natchez-related books.

Rare, out-of-print, and hard-to-find books by 1991 lecturers as well as Natchez-related books will be for sale by Choctaw Books of Jackson, Mississippi.

Bookshop chairman is Willie Mae Dunn, former librarian, Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez.

Nearly all of the 1991 NLC lecturers will be on hand to autograph copies of their books at the Autograph Party on Friday, May 31, from 2-3 p.m. in The Natchez Eola Hotel dining room.

BUY YOUR BOOKS EARLY! - DON'T BE DISAPPOINTED!

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INSTRUCTORS: PLEASE ANNOUNCE IN ALL YOUR CLASSES.



The Natchez Literary Celebration

Sponsored by
Copiah-Lincoln Community College
and
The National Park Service
•Natchez Trace Parkway
•Natchez National Historical Park

Post Office Box 894
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(601) 442-9111
(601) 442-7047
FAX (601) 446-9967

YOU AND YOURS ARE INVITED

FREE!

YES, Free Tickets to:

- *Lectures by International Experts May 29-June 1
- *Pops Concert May 29
- *William Johnson House Dedication Ceremony May 30
- *Flower Show May 31
- *Autograph Party for Lecturers May 31
- *275th Natchez Birthday Party June 1

and, at low cost,

- *Picnic Lunch May 30
- *Play based on William Johnson's Diary May 30 and June 1
- *Historic House Tour May 31
- *Gala Evening Party May 31
- *House Tour & Lunch at Stanton Hall June 1
- *Souvenirs & Printed Materials

RESERVE YOUR SEAT TODAY!

GO BY THE ADMISSIONS OFFICE AT THE WASHINGTON SITE
TO SIGN UP FOR FREE SEATS AND TO PAY FOR RELATED ACTIVITIES.

OR

WRITE: P.O. BOX 894, NATCHEZ, MS 39121

OR

CALL 1-800-647-6742 or (601) 442-7341

HELP MAKE HISTORY!

Be a part of the

1991 NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION

May 29-June 1



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Historic *Natchez* on the Mississippi



NEWS UPDATE

RIVERBOAT GAMBLING . . . All the legal hurdles have been cleared for riverboat gambling in Natchez. Waterfront landowners at Natchez Under-the-Hill are negotiating with developers who plan an \$18 million project there. Plans include a 1000 passenger gambling ship modeled after the steamboat paddlewheelers and restoration

of the nineteenth century buildings there. The project will include shops, dining and entertainment on both land and water.

Natchez Under-the-Hill was originally a rough and tumble waterfront settlement with riverboat gamblers, floozies and flatboatmen. Mississippi's "Barbary Coast," this area was a striking contrast to the genteel Natchez at the top of the hill. The restoration will be carefully planned to take you back to the wide open era (albeit a safe, clean one).

Construction is scheduled to begin in the spring of 1991, with gambling coming on line as early as the fall. In any case, we can expect Natchez Under-the-Hill to be bustling with activity before January, 1992.

DUNCAN PARK MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSE EXPANSION . . . Beautiful Duncan Park in the heart of Natchez will soon be even more appealing as the construction of another nine holes for the public golf course gets underway. Scheduled for completion in the fall, the course addition was designed by Auer, Clark and Associates of Wheaton, Maryland. This work kicks off a series of improvements for the entire course, including a new driving range and landscaping with native flowering shrubs along the fairways. The air conditioned club house already offers a Pro Shop, lockers, a game room and hot and cold sandwiches and drinks. This expansion will increase to three the number of quality golf courses available for convention delegates and leisure travelers.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NATCHEZ SPRING PILGRIMAGE (March 9-April 7) . . . Each year lovers of history and the romantic traditions of the Old South are treated to a month of celebration in Natchez. Ladies in hoopskirts welcome guests to thirty beautiful antebellum homes, complete with the relics and furnishings

of a vanished era. Old fashioned gardens of azaleas and camellias, sweet olive trees and boxwood hedges abound. Evening entertainment includes *The Confederate Pageant*, depicting scenes from the Old South, the play *Southern Exposure*, a farce on the Natchez Pilgrimage itself, and "A Southern Road to Freedom" a musical interpretation of the Natchez African American experience from slave ship to modern day.

NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION (May 29-June 1) . . . This four day conference features nationally renown historians and literary figures. The 1991 theme is "From Provincial Outpost to National Treasure: Natchez Celebrates its 275th Anniversary" and includes lectures, historic tours, several meals and a number of social outings. Also scheduled is the debut of the premiere of a play based on William Johnson's diary, written 1835-1851, about Natchez. (Johnson was a very prominent free Black in antebellum Natchez.) Travel writers interested in attending this event as a guest of Natchez Convention & Visitor Bureau should call Brad Chism at 800-647-6724.

NATCHEZ OPERA FESTIVAL (May 4-June 1) . . . The inaugural four week festival will feature opera, musicals, recitals, miniconcerts and other functions. The first headline event is Phyllis Demotropolous in a Gala Operatic Recital at Melrose. The premier musical will be *Man of La Mancha* starring George Hogan as Don Quixote and Donna Appledorn as Aldonza. This year's festival concludes with *La Traviata* starring Victoria Pelagio as Violetta, Richard Fracker as Alfredo and Robert McFarland as Germont. Throughout the festival, additional events are scheduled in antebellum homes and other special venues. Travel writers interested in attending this event as a guest of Natchez Convention & Visitor Bureau should call Brad Chism at 800-647-6724.

Natchez Convention & Visitor Bureau • 311 Liberty Road • Natchez, Mississippi 39120
601-446-6345 • 1-800-647-6724

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